

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 16, 2020

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin
Secretary
United States Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin,

We write to urge you to provide urgent tax-filing and tax-payment relief to Oregonians affected by the unprecedented wildfires across the state, as authorized by Section 7508A of the Internal Revenue Code.

On September 7, Oregon experienced a windstorm with winds up to 50 miles per hour and gusts of 60 miles per hour. This event, combined with the worst drought in nearly 30 years, created the conditions that sparked some of the most devastating wildfires in Oregon's history. While the fires are still raging, we already know that, tragically, at least 10 of our fellow Oregonians have lost their lives. Emergency management officials warned us to expect additional fatalities as search and rescue efforts continue.

These wildfires have already burned approximately one million acres. Tens of thousands of Oregonians have fled their homes, and hundreds of thousands more have been subjected to evacuation protocols. Many of these evacuees still have not returned to their communities due to active fire conditions. Limited estimates concluded that thousands of homes and businesses have already been destroyed. Millions of people who were not affected by the fires directly have encountered smoke pollution that has made the air quality hazardous to human health. Businesses across the state have also faced power outages, blocked major transportation routes, and long-term damage to the state's infrastructure. All of this is occurring while many of the areas impacted by fire conditions are unreachable.

Yesterday, President Trump approved a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Oregon to supplement state, tribal, and local recovery efforts for Benton, Clackamas, Columbia, Coos, Deschutes, Douglas, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Multnomah, Tillamook, Wasco, Washington, and Yamhill counties and Individual Assistance for Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, and Marion counties in Oregon.¹ Given the extraordinary circumstances of these wildfires, we urge you to use your authority under Section 7508A of the Internal Revenue Code to postpone certain tax-filing and tax-payment deadlines for Oregonians in the covered disaster area.

¹ DR-4562-OR, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Oregon Wildfires and Straight-Line Winds Major Disaster Declaration (2020, September 15). Retrieved September 15, 2020, from <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4562>

Following the recent disaster declaration for individual assistance issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for the California Wildfires, the Internal Revenue Service postponed certain tax deadlines for individuals and businesses.² Comporting with past disaster tax relief announcements, relief was extended not only to individuals and businesses who live and are located in affected areas but also to taxpayers whose records are in covered disaster areas or who are working to assist relief activities. It's clear that Oregonians are facing similar burdens and need similar relief.

Again, we urge you to provided needed tax relief to affected Oregonians as soon as possible. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



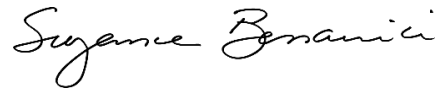
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress

Cc: Charles P. Rettig, Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service

² CA-2020-06, IRS announces tax relief for California wildfire victims. (2020, August 26). Retrieved September 14, 2020, from <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-announces-tax-relief-for-california-wildfire-victims>