



Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

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For Immediate Release
Thursday, July 28, 2005

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Baucus Continues Campaign to Improve IRS Taxpayer Assistance

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) has released the results of a study evaluating the process used by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to determine the types, times and locations of services it provides to taxpayers who want face-to-face assistance.

Taking into account the complexity of a tax return, the report noted that mistakes and misinformation can easily contribute to noncompliance and that IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TACs) provide a valuable service to taxpayers wanting face-to-face interaction to help them meet their tax obligations. TIGTA noted that the IRS lacks sufficient management tools to make sound decisions regarding the best mix of services and locations.

The IRS, which recently announced plans to shut down almost seventy TACs, agreed with TIGTA's recommendations to improve its processes. Both the Senate and the House Appropriations Committees have approved legislation barring further IRS action to shut down the TACs until TIGTA performs another study to determine the impact on taxpayers.

Senator Max Baucus, ranking member of the Senate Committee on Finance and the leader of Senate efforts to stop the IRS's plan to close TACs, is also an outspoken critic of the IRS's general lack of reliable information to measure productivity and performance.

In response to the study, Senator Baucus commented, "This report reinforces my position that the IRS should not be closing TACs. It is clear the IRS's decision to reduce face-to-face taxpayer service was made to save money and not to serve the best interests of America's taxpayers. How the IRS could take such an important step without thorough and reliable information is beyond me. Congress is doing the right thing to stop the IRS from following through on this rash decision."

The complete report, entitled "The Effectiveness of the Taxpayer Assistance Center Program Cannot Be Measured" is located at <http://www.treas.gov/tigta/>.

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