

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

August 12, 2021

Janet Yellen
Secretary of the Treasury
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen,

We ask that as you work to fulfill President Biden's executive order on promoting access to voting, you consider mandating voter registration services be available at all Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) programs.

As you are aware, on March 7th, 2021, President Biden signed [Executive Order 14019](#) on Promoting Access to Voting. The order tasks the head of each federal agency within 200 days to submit to the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy a strategic plan outlining ways their agency can promote voter registration and participation. The order specifies that agencies "provide access to voter registration services" in the course of "activities or services that directly engage with the public." Moreover, the order calls on agencies to consider "soliciting and facilitating approved, nonpartisan third-party organizations" to provide these services.

This Executive Order highlights the importance of doing everything possible to ensure all American citizens can vote and be heard. Since there is no national automatic registration, individuals must take it upon themselves to get registered to vote; the least we can do is make it easier for them to do so. One way we can do this is by creating more opportunities for people to easily access voter registration forms. The best way to do so is by providing these materials at institutions that the vast majority of people interact; one of those institutions is tax preparation.

Much like the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 that allowed voters to register to vote with their local motor vehicle department, the [Filer Voter Act](#) that was introduced this year will require tax preparers to provide individuals the option to receive voter registration materials. Whether you do your taxes in person, online, or through a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program, the tax preparers will make sure you have the option of receiving a voter registration application form.

In a recent study, researchers at the Brookings Institution conducted an experiment testing the efficacy of voter registration at VITA sites in Cleveland and Dallas. The study found that a Filer Voter program doubled the likelihood of unregistered voters registering to vote. Replicated at all VITA sites nationally, this would lead to about 115,000 unregistered eligible voters registering to vote, including 63,000 people who would not otherwise register. Moreover, the study found that the addition of voter registration services did not slow tax preparation at the participating sites. The most effective strategy to implement voter registration at VITA sites would be for the IRS to

mandate that all organizations participating in the VITA program offer voter registration to their clients and submit the completed forms in accordance with local law.

While legislation is necessary to mandate the provision of voter registration services by private tax preparers, we believe that you have the ability under existing statutory authorities to require voter registration services be provided at VITA sites. The IRS could also provide VITA sites with copies of the [National Mail Voter Registration Form](#), which includes state-specific guidance on how to complete and submit the voter registration forms.

We ask that your offices consider including VITA as a route for people to register to vote in your plan to fulfill Executive Order 14019. This action will undoubtedly increase accessibility to voter registration forms and voting information. We can all agree that voting is a vital aspect of the democratic process, so we urge you to consider implementing these small steps to make the process easier and more available for all Americans. We ask that you provide us an update on your decision before you make your submission to the White House. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



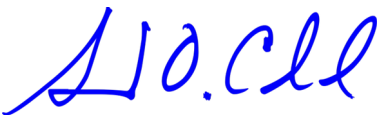
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Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



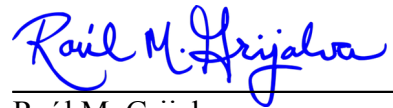
Salud Carbajal
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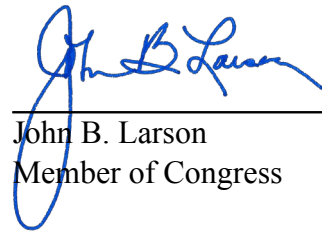
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