



PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 15, 2024

Treasurer Fleming Opposes IRS Tax-Filing Program

BATON ROUGE, LA – The Internal Revenue Service recently announced the launch of their free Direct File pilot program for taxpayers in 12 states.

“The Direct File program will allow the IRS to become entirely too powerful as tax preparer, collector, and enforcer. So, the same organization that files your return can possibly fine or prosecute you, although you may be completely innocent. It is a scary thought,” said Louisiana State Treasurer John Fleming, M.D.

“As typical of the Biden administration, this program is wasteful and unnecessary,” Dr. Fleming said. Currently, there are already 30 organizations that offer free tax preparation services.

While taxpayers may not benefit, the IRS will certainly benefit from the new program, which is expensive, with an estimated cost of \$250 million.

Direct File is another initiative of the gargantuan Inflation Reduction Act passed by the Democrat controlled Congress and signed into law by President Joe Biden in 2022. The new law empowered the IRS with a massive \$80 billion increase in their budget to hire an additional 87,000 agents.

Fleming joined 20 other state treasurers belonging to the State Financial Officers Foundation to oppose the new IRS program. The group labeled it as “flawed” and noted it will have “negative consequences” for “state treasuries.”

Even worse, since the program only handles federal tax returns, according to Dr. Fleming, “some filers will be unaware of the need to file state tax returns. So, they could be subject to state tax penalties and might not take advantage of available state tax refunds.”

Taxpayer advocates such as David D. Ransom of the American Coalition for Taxpayer Rights note that the Direct File program will be neither free nor easy to implement. Ransom also believes that Direct File will not ultimately benefit taxpayers because of the complexity of the U.S. tax code.

Today is the deadline for filing a tax return or requesting an extension.

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