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March 30, 2020

The Honorable Steven Mnuchin
United States Secretary of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin,

With the bipartisan passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, the CARES Act (PL 116-136), Congress requires that you provide every American with a direct payment based on income, filing status, and number of dependents. Now that Congress has acted, it is vital that federal agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) move quickly to get assistance in the hands of Americans, including the Small Businesses across the country that are relying on your leadership to help them during this crisis. I write in search of specific answers on how you plan to make these direct payments available as quickly as possible and that you ensure that the most vulnerable populations who need these funds most – including those who have been recently laid off or become unemployed – receive it first.

As you know, PL 116-136 directs the IRS to make direct payments to Americans making \$75,000 or less with a payment of \$1,200, plus \$500 for each child aged 16 and under, or other amounts depending on filing status and income. You've [said it yourself](#): Americans need these dollars now. Families in my district, California's 10 Congressional District desperately need this aid now. And they need a plan of action from the IRS, including a timeline, amount expected, and information regarding updating account information, including for direct deposit or changes to a mailing address.

According to your own timeline, the IRS plans to send checks “immediately” with the aims of achieving this endeavor “in the next two weeks.” Given this timeline, it is deeply concerning that the IRS Congressional Affairs and the IRS website to date have no updated information about how this plan will be implemented. On March 26, 2020, my Senior staffer reached out to the IRS Congressional Affairs office to ask a simple question – *what form allows my constituents to update direct deposit information*. Your agency's answer was deflective, unhelpful, and showed a lack of fundamental preparation needed for this crisis: “The IRS does not have any information yet on the pending legislation involving stimulus checks. For the latest news, we urge people to check <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus>.” If a staffer of a Congressional office cannot get an answer to a basic question, how is any other American expected to get answers to questions regarding their payments?

The [IRS website](#) – to which your staff directed mine – is not ready for primetime. In fact, as of today, the website still says “no information available yet” regarding the direct payments. This is simply unacceptable. Americans deserve better and typical bureaucratic speed will not work in this crisis. The stimulus payments sent out in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis resulted in an influx of calls to the IRS, and many Americans were unable to get the help they needed to get them through the beginning of the Great Recession. That can’t happen this time around.

Many of my constituents have been quarantined for weeks and experienced lay-offs, losing income for one or more pay periods, crippling their ability to make ends meet and buy food or pay bills on time. We need action from the IRS and we need answers to the following questions immediately.

1. In an interview, you [made a commitment](#) to creating an online tool for those without direct deposit set up to do so in time to receive their payments, but you have not released any details. When will this tool become operational? If not, can Americans fill out form 8888 as they would to update direct deposit information for the refund of normal taxes or the purchase of savings bonds?
2. I represent a district with many commuters and recent transplants. In light of this, many of my constituents may have moved since they last filed their taxes. Will the IRS create an online portal to update a mailing address? And if so, what is the timeline of that portal? If not, which form is appropriate to update address information?
3. You stated you expect to have a small business loan program up and running in the coming week. Will the program be available to small businesses by a week from today on April 6, 2020? Please provide details regarding that program.

I look forward to your answers, Secretary Mnuchin, to these timely questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Harder". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Josh Harder