March 2, 2017

The Honorable Orrin Hatch  
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady  
Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Hatch and Brady:

We write you to request that you use your authority to request the tax returns of President Donald Trump for review by the Senate Committee on Finance and House Committee on Ways and Means.

Breaking with forty years of precedent, President Trump continues to refuse to make public his tax returns. The last time a President tried to keep his tax returns hidden, the Congress acted. In 1973 and 1974, the Joint Committee on Taxation reviewed and made public President Nixon’s tax returns. Following a leak that then-President Nixon had paid very little in taxes, the Committee’s nonpartisan staff reviewed his returns and found that Nixon owed almost $500,000 in additional taxes over four years. Due to the significance of the issue to the country, the Committee exercised its authority and voted 9-to-1 to release the information to the public.\(^1\)

The Chairmen of the Joint Committee on Taxation, the Senate Finance Committee, and the House Committee on Ways and Means have the authority to request copies of President Trump’s tax returns under Section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code. Disclosure would serve the public interest of clarifying President Trump’s conflicts of interest in office, the potential for him to personally benefit from tax reform, and ensure that he is not receiving any preferential treatment from the IRS.

These Committees have broad jurisdiction over a variety of laws that affect the lives of millions of Americans, including the federal tax law. The President and Congressional Republicans have been very vocal regarding their desire to enact comprehensive tax reform this Congress. We believe that it is imperative for the public to know and understand how such tax reform will

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benefit the President, his 564 financial positions in domestic and foreign companies,[2] and his self-reported net worth of more than $10 billion.[3]

The Founding Fathers were so determined to prevent corruption among public officeholders that they wrote into our Constitution the foreign emoluments clause. Yet President Trump has chosen to keep an ownership stake in his businesses, in which we know that state-owned enterprises in China[4] and the United Arab Emirates[5] are involved. We know that his business ties stretch to India, Turkey, the Philippines, and beyond. None of these potential conflicts and violations of the emoluments clause can be verified until and unless we have disclosure from President Trump.

If the President does not either release his returns or consent to examination of such returns by this Committee, we urge you, as Chairman of the Committee and pursuant to Section 6103(f)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code, to submit a written request to the Secretary of the Treasury by March 15, 2017, for copies of the President’s federal tax returns for the last ten years. These returns and all accompanying return information should then be made available for examination by all Committee Members in a closed executive session. We further request that the Committee then vote in this closed session to submit the President’s federal tax returns to the House of Representatives and Senate —thereby, if successful, making them available to the public.

We believe the powerful and respected Committees on Finance and Ways and Means have the responsibility to ensure oversight of the executive branch by requesting a review of President Trump’s tax returns and moving toward a formal release of these documents to the public.

We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Sander M. Levin
Lloyd Doggett
John B. Larson

Richard E. Neal
John Lewis
Mike Thompson
Earl Blumenauer

Sanford Bishop
Pramila Jayapal
Jim Costa
Scott H. Peters

Bradley S. Schneider
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Maxine Waters