

**Chairman Hal Rogers**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government**  
**IRS Oversight Hearing**  
**June 3, 2013**  
**Opening Statement As Prepared**

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Thank you, Chairman Crenshaw, for yielding. And thank you, Commissioner Werfel, for making your first appearance on the Hill with this Subcommittee today – and thank you for meeting with us again, Mr. George.

I echo my colleagues' concerns about the targeting scandal and other inappropriate spending at the IRS. The IRS has committed grave violations of the public's trust that should give all Americans cause for concern.

Today, we're discussing at least a three-fold misuse of public funds. It's our duty as appropriators to get to the bottom of any misuse of federal tax dollars, particularly as this Subcommittee drafts the bill that will fund the IRS for the next fiscal year.

The alleged targeting of conservative organizations applying for tax-exempt status is a shameful violation of the intent of the Constitution. I am deeply offended at the notion that a federal agency can somehow pass judgment on an entire group of people simply based on their political affiliation.

Having an "enemies list" harkens back to a dark page of our past, and the arrogance of power that we've seen from those involved is deeply, deeply disconcerting.

Furthermore, I am absolutely appalled at the apparent waste of taxpayer dollars on frivolous conferences, outlined in your forthcoming report, Mr. George. In no way, shape, or form is this kind of excess ever appropriate. This bureaucratic largess is even more unsettling as we face huge budget shortfalls in critical areas of government, including our national defense.

I'm concerned that we keep finding out new missteps the IRS has taken, like these conferences. So we must take every step possible to figure out how we can stop this kind of abuse in its tracks.

We are in the middle of some grim budget times, and we simply cannot allow the IRS to waste precious tax dollars on improper practices that treat Americans unequally – for any reason – or on frivolous activities, or improper tax refunds. When we provide you with more than \$10 billion annually to fulfill your duties, we expect you to spend it wisely and effectively.

Commissioner Werfel, I know you have already publicly stated these conferences were "inappropriate" uses of taxpayer dollars, and that you intend to root out any other inappropriate behavior at the IRS, and I hope that this Committee works with you to review how we can prevent spending like this from ever happening again.

My Committee already has and will continue to enact tough measures and oversight at other agencies to ensure that this kind of excess and abuse does not happen. If it takes legislation to stop these misguided endeavors, then that's what we'll do.

I look forward to your testimony today and your answers to Members' questions to help this Subcommittee provide the vigorous oversight necessary to prevent bad actors from running amok.

Thank you, and I yield back.

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