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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2506

September 12, 1996

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Bill Petterson
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Dear Bill:

Thank you for contacting regarding the establishment of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). I appreciate having the benefit of your thoughts on this issue.


You are quite correct when you state that an organization with the actual name "Internal Revenue Service" was not established by law. Instead, in 1862, Congress approved 26 U.S.C. 7802. This statute established the office of "Commissioner of Internal Revenue." As the act states, "The Commissioner of Internal Revenue shall have such duties and powers as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury." In modern times these duties and powers flow to the Commissioner who implements appropriate policy through the IRS.

In addition to Section 7802, Section 7803 authorizes the Secretary of Treasury to employ such number of persons deemed proper for the administration and enforcement of the internal revenue laws. It is these employees who comprise the IRS.

I have enclosed the appropriate section of the U.S. Code for your information. I hope you find it helpful.

Thank you again for contacting me. Please feel free to do so again with further questions on this or any other matter important to you.

Best regards,



Pat Danner
Member of Congress

PD/hhm