

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

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ISRAEL AND BISHOP SUPPORT TAXPAYER PROTECTION ACT *Bipartisan Legislation Will Help Prevent Identity Theft, Tax Fraud*

Washington, DC— Washington, D.C. —This week Congressmen Steve Israel (NY-02) and Tim Bishop (NY-01) joined an overwhelming bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives to pass the Taxpayer Protection Act (H.R. 1677), legislation that provides taxpayers with stronger protections from identity theft and tax fraud and puts the tax code back on the side of working families. The legislation was approved in the House of Representatives by a vote of 407 to 7.

"It's hard enough on Long Island to pay your bills, pay your taxes and pay for the gas in your car," said Congressman Israel. "To then have to worry that your identity is going to be stolen and you'll be paying someone else's bills is intolerable. The Taxpayer Protection Act requires the government to alert taxpayers of identity theft and cracks down on predators offering 'too good to be true' tax refund anticipation loans and websites that mislead the public."

"The Taxpayer Protection Act helps put the IRS and the federal government back on the side of middle-class taxpayers," said Congressman Bishop. "This is one step toward protecting taxpayers from threats like identity theft and scam artists. Now, we need to protect middle-class taxpayers from the Alternative Minimum Tax which threatens millions of families. Instead of over-burdening honest, hard-working families, we should continue focusing on ensuring that those who try to shirk their tax responsibilities are made to pay the full bill. In doing so, we would help put our country back on the path to economic prosperity and can relieve middle-class Americans of the AMT burden once and for all."

The Taxpayer Protection Act (H.R. 1677):

- Requires the IRS to notify a taxpayer that there may have been unauthorized use of the taxpayer's identity – in the course of a tax fraud investigation.
- Cracks down on misleading websites that seek to get personal information by imitating the IRS, by increasing both civil and criminal penalties for these offenses.
- Simplifies tax filing requirements for businesses owned jointly by husbands and wives.
- Strengthen IRS outreach to make sure that people know that they are entitled to tax refunds or to payments under the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).
- Increases taxpayer protections from "predatory" providers of refund anticipation loans, gives taxpayers more time to recover property seized improperly by the IRS, and works to stop the widespread tax fraud initiated by inmates of federal prisons.

In addition to the Taxpayer Protection Act, the House of Representatives has already passed \$1.3 billion in tax cuts to help small businesses grow and hire new workers to keep our economy strong, without adding to the deficit. House Democrats are also committed to a long term fix for the Alternative Minimum Tax.