



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 17, 2012

IRS Would Revoke Passports for Alleged Tax Debt Under Bill

Incredibly, under the legislation, the IRS would not need to prove or even officially charge that a person owes taxes to hold them hostage within U.S. borders — just an unsubstantiated allegation would be enough. There is also no way of challenging the IRS' claims or of seeking access to due process, according to analysts. And with some 70,000 pages, nobody — not even those charged with enforcing it — truly understands the whole U.S. tax code.



However, the measure — which at first will apply only to individuals accused of owing \$50,000 or more — does include exceptions on the foreign-travel ban for emergencies, “humanitarian” purposes, and for those who are in the process of paying in a “timely” manner. Perhaps coincidentally, the total U.S. government debt divided by the number of Americans works out to [about \\$50,000](#) owed per citizen — not including the tens or even hundreds of trillions in unfunded liabilities.

Still, despite the travel “exceptions,” experts say the whole scheme is unconstitutional and represents a blatant violation of due process rights. “It takes away your right to enter or exit the country based upon a non-judicial IRS determination that you owe taxes,” constitutional attorney Angel Reyes [explained](#) to Fox Business. “It’s a scary thought that our congressional representatives want to give the IRS the power to detain US citizens over taxes, which could very well be in dispute.”

A financial expert also told Fox that the unconstitutional provision would apply to an alarmingly high number of people — especially in the wake of the economic crisis. And in the coming years, as jobs continue to evaporate and the value of the dollar continues to sink, more and more people will likely be affected by the travel ban.

The controversial provision is part of Senate Bill 1813: legislation supposedly crafted “to reauthorize Federal-aid highway and highway safety construction programs, and for other purposes.” Apparently one of the many “other purposes” is to trap individuals accused of not paying taxes within the country, as analysts and experts have long [warned](#) would happen eventually.

The original bill was introduced last year by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), with the passport amendment added in March by Sen. Reid — reportedly at the [behest of Sen. Orrin Hatch](#) (R-Utah). Despite the fact that it extracts billions of dollars from taxpayers with new and increased “fees” and



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taxes, it was passed overwhelmingly in the Senate last month with just 22 voting against.

However, the massive bill is expected to meet stronger opposition in the GOP-controlled House. And as the outcry over the dangerous passport amendment continues to grow [across](#) the political spectrum, resistance is expected to escalate.

Sen. Boxer, however, is determined to ram it all through. "There are many people on both sides of the aisle in the Senate who want to get our bill, [Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act] MAP-21, passed into law, and I am going to do everything I can to keep the pressure on the Republican House to do just that," she said in a [statement](#) about the broader transportation legislation.

Boxer declined to comment about the foreign-travel provision, as did other lawmakers. But according to legislators who [support the measure](#), it is just a natural extension of the federal government's purported authority to revoke the passports of individuals who are behind on child-support payments.

Official estimates produced by Senate staffers [claim](#) the travel prohibition amendment could raise around \$743 million for the federal government over a decade. To put that figure in perspective, it represents significantly less than 0.1 percent of just the 2012 federal deficit.

Examined another way, the new revenue would be enough to pay [just the interest on the federal debt held by the communist dictatorship ruling China for about 10 days](#). Or, contrasted with the unrelated legislation it was incorporated into, the expected additional funds would not even pay for close to 1 percent of the [spending](#) authorized under the broader transportation bill.

If approved, the amendment would be enforced by the State Department, which handles passports, after receiving information about allegedly delinquent taxpayers from the IRS. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, who famously blamed his own tax-evasion problem on the "Turbo Tax" program, would essentially be able to trap anyone inside U.S. borders with a mere allegation.

Meanwhile, the IRS has come under increasing scrutiny after it was accused of targeting Obama's political enemies. Tea Party groups and constitutionalists in particular have [repeatedly complained](#) of harassment and persecution by the Obama administration's tax authorities. And criticism is only growing louder.

Ironically, the passport amendment could also cause trouble for hundreds of thousands of federal workers and government retirees who are delinquent on their taxes. According to estimates [cited](#) by lawmakers and media reports, about 280,000 current and former U.S. public servants owe almost \$3.5 billion in back taxes.

Whether or not active and retired federal employees would be prevented from traveling abroad over tax allegations remains unclear, but the law does not provide exceptions for bureaucrats — even on official business. The transportation bill would also allow the IRS to levy federal-government workers' "Thrift Savings Plan" accounts to collect back taxes.

Geithner, whose Treasury Department oversees the IRS, would also be able to [punish foreign governments and firms](#) if he determined that they somehow "significantly impede U.S. tax enforcement." That provision would purport to expand the U.S. government's power to fight money laundering. Ironically, the Obama administration is [currently under congressional investigation for laundering drug profits of Mexican cartels](#).

Some are already voting with their feet. Well-off Americans are [fleeing the U.S. in increasing numbers](#) as the federal government's insatiable appetite for more money continues to grow unabated. "Their



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numbers are likely to increase as a loophole allowing wealthy Americans to move their monies and wealth offshore closes at the end of the year," [noted](#) Bob Adelman in an article about the trend.

At the same time, however, the IRS has made Americans into [international pariahs](#) — countless financial institutions around the world now refuse to do business with U.S. citizens due to onerous regulatory and reporting requirements. Combined with other developments, the IRS actions — and the fact that the U.S. government is one of the last on earth that taxes its citizens no matter where they reside — have led to [record numbers of Americans surrendering their U.S. citizenship](#).

However, domestic resistance to the IRS is growing among both [liberals](#) and [conservatives](#) (along with traditionally tax-resisting libertarians). Controversial anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan, for instance, is [openly refusing to pay taxes](#) as long as the government continues to wage "illegal" wars. Pastors are [fighting IRS restrictions on free speech](#). And more and more [activists, Republicans lawmakers, and political candidates](#), meanwhile, are seeking to altogether abolish the wildly unpopular institution and the [controversial income tax](#) it collects.

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