

**For Immediate Release:** Contact: Chandler Smith

June 27, 2013 202-224-6244

**Heller Still Waiting for Sebelius to Respond to Congress**

**(Washington, D.C.) –** After receiving no response to a [letter sent last month](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=3adaa714-86df-4e99-911e-25c4c61a18b2), U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) has again written to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius regarding his concerns with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) unfairly targeting conservative groups. In the letter Heller expressed his concerns with the hiring of new IRS agents to help implement ObamaCare. Just last month Heller [introduced legislation](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=234eb8c9-58a2-47a1-a40d-e9ccc91014d0) to suspend IRS funding to enforce the health care law.

A PDF of the letter is attached to this press release.

**Full text of the letter below**:

June 27, 2013

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

200 Independence Avenue, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

Following up on my previous correspondence with you dated May 14, 2013, I am concerned that after one month, you have yet to directly respond to my concerns. As I stated before, I am deeply troubled by the actions of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as well as the way in which the IRS has responded to these events. With the recent report showing the agency spent around $49 million on conferences between 2011 and 2012, it is even clearer that the IRS be investigated further before receiving its full funding. I would like you to know that I have introduced legislation to suspend IRS funding to enforce the health care law. It’s time the IRS show Congress that it’s doing its job and upholding the Constitutional rights of all Americans.

I am writing to you again to express my continued concern, as well as ask for your cooperation at this time by working with Congress to find a solution. Because the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is fully responsible for the President’s health care law, I request that you express to Secretary Jacob Lew your concerns with Ms. Sarah Hall Ingram, and ask for her resignation. She must be held accountable for her actions. If not, I hope that you may consider sitting down with Ms. Ingram and ask for her cooperation with Congress at this time.

Furthermore, I respectfully request that you help us with the following questions:

* The IRS, as you know, will be implementing 47 separate statutory provisions, as well as coordinating with other federal agencies, like HHS, to provide assistance to qualifying individuals for health insurance premiums. On May 8, 2013, Secretary Lew expressed that the Treasury Department had reduced spending by 2.3 percent when excluding the IRS. The IRS is currently the only Treasury agency asking for an increase in funding in the 2014 budget to implement the health care law. In light of the Congressional investigations concerning the IRS’s misconduct in targeting specific groups for their political beliefs, do you believe additional IRS funding is warranted until these Congressional investigations have concluded?
* The official who was previously in charge of the IRS unit subjecting groups is now head of IRS health care implementation.
  + How will HHS work with Treasury to conduct oversight of the IRS? And,
  + Should Secretary Lew place someone else in charge of health care implementation at this time?
* Because of current concerns and ongoing Congressional investigations, do you believe a third party assessment of the IRS is necessary?
  + What actions should this third party take in order to maintain IRS credibility as they implement the health care law?

I believe this needs a combined effort from all departments involved, as well as Congress, to assure the public that the federal government is working to resolve this issue together. As a politically neutral agency, the IRS must operate with the utmost integrity. Members of Congress have sworn to uphold and protect the Constitution, and Congress must ensure through the use of oversight that all federal entities, including the IRS, are held to these standards. Again, I would like to resolve this issue as best as possible, and your response is the beginning to a solution.

Sincerely,

U.S. Senator Dean Heller

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