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| **For Immediate Release:** | **Contacts:**  |
| March 30, 2017 | Megan Taylor 202-224-6244 (Heller)Jenny Donohue/Rachel Petri 202-224-3978 (Brown) |
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**Heller, Brown Introduce Bipartisan Bill To Boost Free Tax Preparation And Filing Services***Volunteer Preparers Have High Accuracy Rate, Help Save Taxpayers Money**Program Helped more than 3.8 Million File in 2016* **Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senators Dean Heller (R-NV) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) – members of the Senate Finance Committee – today introduced legislation that would support free tax preparation sites that help individuals and families file their income tax returns. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Permanence Actof 2017would make permanent an Internal Revenue Service (IRS)-administered matching grant program for volunteer tax preparation sites nationwide. The bill marks the first bipartisan legislation to authorize VITA permanently and follows clearance of a similar bipartisan measure in the Senate Finance Committee last year. “Our tax code is too complex and overly burdensome for Nevadans, and too often those who are in need of a return the most can’t afford a tax preparer to decipher its convoluted provisions. Incentivizing tax preparation groups to assist lower-income Nevadans is a reasonable way to help ensure Nevadans can keep more of their hard-earned money,” **said Heller.** “In 2015 alone, these volunteer tax preparation organizations helped 22,650 Nevadans file their tax returns and possessed refunds that amounted to a total of more than $25,000,000. I am proud to partner with Senator Brown on this legislation that creates a level-playing field for Nevadans and will allow them to maximize their returns.” “It should be easy for working Americans to file and claim their hard-earned money without having to hire an expensive tax preparer,” **said Brown.** “Volunteer tax preparers provide critical assistance to those who need a hand filing so they can make sure they are receiving all the tax credits they are eligible for and getting the return they’ve earned. They also save taxpayers money by cutting down on administrative costs.”                                                                                The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people who make $54,000 or less, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and limited English speakers by helping prepare and file their income tax returns.  During the 2016 income tax filing season, VITA programs nationwide filed more than 3.8 million federal income tax returns. This helped Americans claim approximately $1.1 billion they’d earned over the tax year. ###http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png |