

## Congressional committee demanding answers from IRS over veteran targeting

Posted By [Patrick Howley](#) On 10:17 PM 09/05/2013 In Politics | [No Comments](#)

A congressional committee is currently reviewing the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) response to lawmakers' concerns following new revelations that the scandal-plagued agency is targeting the veterans organization the American Legion.

The House Committee on Veterans Affairs last week [requested](#) that the IRS respond to complaints about its "unduly burdensome and completely unwarranted" requirements for American Legion posts. The Committee gave the IRS a September 3 deadline to respond to complaints.

As The Daily Caller [first reported](#), the IRS is targeting the American Legion with a new set of auditing guidelines and penalties, designed in January 2011 while the IRS was admittedly targeting conservative groups with improper audits.

"Given the unique role of veterans' organizations in our country, there are special rules in the nation's tax law to provide tax-exempt status. In fact, there are specific criteria set by Congress that these groups must meet to qualify and operate under Internal Revenue Section 501(c)(19), ranging from membership guidelines to fund-raising efforts," acting IRS commissioner Danny Werfel wrote to the chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee in a September 4 letter obtained by TheDC.

"We conduct exams of veterans' organizations to ensure they adhere to the [Internal Revenue Code]. Given the important role these charities play in the nation, exams help protect the integrity of the tax-exempt sector and the important groups operating under the special provisions of the tax law. There is no special enforcement effort underway regarding 501(c)(19) organizations, just regular compliance activity," Werfel wrote.

It is unclear how the Veterans Affairs Committee will respond to Werfel's statement, or if Werfel's letter will calm outrage sparked by the August revelations.

"The IRS now requires American Legion posts to maintain dates of service and character of service records for all members... The penalty for not having the required proof of eligibility is, apparently, \$1,000 per day," the American Legion stated.

The American Legion was referring to [a 13-part section](#) of Part 4, Chapter 76 of the Internal Revenue Manual pertaining to "veterans' organizations."

"As if we needed more proof the IRS is completely out of control. After illegally targeting innocent groups solely on the basis of their political beliefs, the IRS now appears to have America's veterans service organizations in the cross hairs," said Rep. Jeff Miller, chairman of the Veterans Affairs committee.

The American Legion, headquartered in Indianapolis, was founded in 1919 as a social and support group for veterans returning from World War I. It is now one of the leading nonpartisan forces lobbying for veterans rights.

The IRS declined to comment for this story, citing a policy of not commenting on congressional correspondence.



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INTERNAL REVENUE  
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