



## **Letter to the Editor**

### **The Dirty Political Hands of the IRS Reach Down into Burleson, Texas**

From the **Texas Patriots Tea Party**, Burleson, Texas  
[officially known as “We, the People of Texas, Inc.”]

May 17, 2013

Obviously, any IRS indiscretion or illegal activity by revealing sensitive tax information to other unrelated parties should concern EVERY TAXPAYER and should not be tolerated. Also, the selective targeting of individuals and groups for additional IRS scrutiny based solely on political grounds or ideology is also a civil rights violation.

That is exactly what has happened to tea parties and other conservative groups around the country, like the **Texas Patriots Tea Party** based in Burleson, Texas. This was an attempt to repress certain views and activities from influencing the last two election cycles. Such government behavior violates our 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights of freedom of speech and association.

The **Texas Patriots Tea Party** was formed in July 2010 by constitutionally-minded citizens who were dissatisfied with our heavy tax burden and the massive growth of the Federal government. Our IRS journey began on June 19, 2012 when we applied to the IRS for tax-exempt status as a 501(c)(4) group [civic leagues, social welfare organizations] and paid our application fee of \$400. This is usually a routine process, but can take some time depending on the inefficiencies of the IRS and any complications with the application. Nevertheless, it became clear to us early in our application process that the IRS was intentionally DELAYING its approval of our application. This occurred during the critical pre-election period in 2012 and we believe the delay was politically motivated. In January and February of this year, we received many intrusive questions [not on the standard IRS form] that we now know were only asked of conservative, not liberal or progressive applicant groups requiring additional information to the IRS for their review.

On January 7, 2013, the IRS requested the following information and gave us 3 weeks to respond:

*Additional Information Requested:*

1. *Enclosed is a copy of information we downloaded from your website. Please confirm the materials are from your website. Because we have provided a copy of this information to you, it is available for public inspection as part of your exemption application.*
2. *Do you maintain any social media pages (such as facebook.com, meetup.com , or twitter)? If so, provide a list of those pages and a representative sample of the postings from each.*
3. *Your website states that the We the People of Texas PAC (WTPTxPAC) was established by you as a political action committee to be able to vet and endorse non-Federal candidates. Provide a copy of all resource allocation agreements that the two organizations have entered into regarding the sharing of staff and other resources. If you do not have any, explain in detail how you allocated shared resources, expenses, volunteers, employees, office space, and other resources.*
4. *You indicated in your Form 1024 that you host educational speakers and educational workshops. Provide copies of meeting and event agendas for these workshops. If you do not have such materials, provide a list of the events and a brief description of each workshop.*
5. *Provide copies of all materials you publish or distribute as requested in Form 1024. This should include, but is not limited to, direct mailings, newsletters, voter guides, pamphlets, flyers, brochures, articles, and any other materials.*

On February 12, 2013, the IRS had the following requests and gave us 2 weeks to respond:

*Additional Information Requested:*

1. *You stated in your January 24, 2013 response that you do not share any resources with the We the People of Texas PAC and have no financial agreements with the organization. Additionally, you stated that the PAC paid for the ad on your web site from its own funds. Provide the following information:*
  - a. *Identify the ad paid for by the PAC. What was the amount paid and how was this amount determined?*
  - b. *Does the PAC pay any amounts for the link and attached information posted on the Texas Patriots Tea Party home page? If so, what are the amounts paid and how are these amounts determined?*
  - c. *Brochures included with your response include endorsements by the We the People of Texas PAC. Did the PAC pay any amounts to have those endorsements distributed by your organization? If so, what were the amounts paid and how were these amounts determined?*
2. *Your organization has invited candidates to speak at various events. Please provide the following information:*
  - a. *How you decide which candidates to invite to participate? Do you invite all candidates for election to participate? If not, please explain.*
  - b. *Provide copies of all materials you distributed with regard to your*

- candidate events, including but not limited to event agendas, flyers, or other promotional materials.*
- c. Provide copies of the invitations you sent to candidates requesting their participation in your forums.*
- 3. The Events portion of your website included in your response dated January 24, 2013, included information for various candidate fundraisers as well as candidate forums hosted by other organizations. With regards to these Event printouts, provide the following information:*
- a. Please explain your role in these events.*

We responded to both of these IRS requests for additional information within their timeframe...but, to us, these questions were clearly unusual, intrusive and seemingly politically-based. Unfortunately, the IRS held all the cards. We had to address or answer their questions in order to get their approval of our application. We are still waiting for approval. During this time, we filed income tax returns as a NON- not-for-profit corporation.

In light of the current scandal in Washington, DC related to the IRS, we now know we were not alone in being singled out for additional tax scrutiny. This scrutiny was apparently solely based on the fact that our organization had words like “tea party” or “patriots” in our NAME. We believe this phenomenon might be systemic within the Obama Administration since we remember also being targeted and labeled as possible terrorist groups by the Department of Homeland Security. The current IRS scrutiny may only be part of a larger effort to demonize conservatives and marginalize groups like ours.

**In response to this scandal, we wrote the IRS the attached letter on May 14, 2013. It shows our frustration and a bit of our anger.**

**Taxes are NOT the problem, but CORRUPT Tax Collectors are.** Being a group that values small, limited government, we truly believe that the **IRS cannot be FIXED** in light of these recent scandals. Replacing a few individuals will not change the obvious culture present in such an organization. We believe that the **IRS should be abolished** completely and that citizens be required to send to the government 10-15% of what they earn via a simple FAIR, FLAT, alternate income or consumption tax. This would be a solution to the decades-old IRS corruption.

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**May 14, 2013**

Internal Revenue Service

Janine L. Estes, 7829

ID# 0203052

It appears that you are in trouble, according to the news reports, so I urge you to approve our application for 501(c)(4) status immediately, while you are still employed and have the power to do so.

We have not received any communication from you since your letter of February 12, 2013. You have had plenty of time to make your decision. I have added our concerns to the Tea Party Patriots for additional input for their pending lawsuit on behalf of all tea party groups around the nation.



Robert M. Russell

Treasurer