

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4606

May 27, 2020

The Honorable Steven Mnuchin
Secretary of Treasury
U.S. Department of Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin-

I write to express concern regarding the Department of Treasury's recent decision to distribute economic impact payments without effective communication to individuals through prepaid debit cards and establish a fee schedule for certain transactions and reissuing cards.

On March 27th, 2020, H.R. 748, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Securities (CARES) Act was signed into law. This bipartisan \$2 trillion relief package is the third bipartisan emergency spending bill passed by Congress to support and advance coronavirus response and recovery efforts across the country and provided direct financial assistance to hardworking families.

I know many Iowans have found the direct financial assistance helpful, as I heard directly from constituents during telephone town halls, and through the feedback received over the last few weeks. The piecemeal implementation of this program has created confusion though, causing many of my constituents to slip through the cracks. The Treasury Department's abrupt move to start issuing outstanding direct assistance payments as prepaid debit cards—instead of checks—to those without direct deposit information has only exacerbated the issue.

Since the distribution of these Economic Impact Payment (EIP) cards began, my office has heard from concerned constituents who are unsure of the security of these cards and their activation process. Since they were expecting a check, some do not know if they ever received the card or threw the card away thinking that they were spam or fraud as the cards can easily be confused with unsolicited credit card mail offers.

This is another example of the lack of clear communication from the Department of Treasury. What's worse is the fact that recipients will be charged \$7.50 to replace a lost or stolen card. There is also an additional \$17.00 for express shipping, creating a greater financial burden for those who need access to their payment as quickly as possible.

Not only do I ask that you abolish these fees immediately, but I also ask that you provide an overview of the prepaid debit card system now in place. Specifically, I request that you provide the following information—

1. Will fees be waived for those who mistook the cards for fraud or spam and request a replacement card?
2. Who should my constituents reach out to at the Internal Revenue Service or the Treasury Department with questions if they are unable to reach a representative through the Money Network Customer Service line?
3. How can members of Congress help constituents cover or waive the costs associated with having the card reissued if you will not take action?
4. How many individuals in Iowa have been sent EIP cards to-date and what percentage of those cards have been activated?
5. How many cards in total are expected to be sent to Iowans?

With the information we have requested above, my office hopes to provide Iowans with certainty and peace of mind that this assistance guaranteed by the CARES Act will reach our state. While we look forward to your reply, the Administration should immediately waive and refund any reissuance or delivering fees associated with individuals accessing their direct payments.

We thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please send an email to Abby.Finkenauer01@mail.house.gov. We look forward to hearing from you and working together to support our country through this crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Abby Finkenauer', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Abby Finkenauer
Member of Congress