



July 23, 2019

The Honorable Deb Fischer  
United States Senate  
454 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Fischer,

On behalf of National Taxpayers Union (NTU), the nation's oldest taxpayer advocacy organization, I write to express our strong support for S. 2119, the Stop Improper Federal Bonuses Act. Your legislation would bring additional oversight and transparency to the payment of taxpayer-funded bonuses to federal workers who have serious workplace conduct violations. We are proud to support this common sense legislation and urge all Senators to call for its swift passage.

With the federal debt now above \$22 trillion and projected \$1 trillion deficits in the near future, it is essential that lawmakers do everything in their power to bring accountability to every dollar that is spent. A bipartisan starting point should be to rein in spending plagued with abuse. Far too often taxpayers hear reports of widespread waste and mismanagement of their hard-earned tax dollars at federal agencies. Ensuring taxpayer dollars are spent in a cost-effective and efficient manner must be at the forefront in the minds of lawmakers.

One of the more egregious examples is the gross overuse of taxpayer funds in the form of bonuses that are given to federal workers who have engaged in serious misconduct and criminal activity. According to a 2018 Department of Treasury Inspector General report, between October 2015 and December 2016, the IRS issued more than \$1.7 million in awards to employees with disciplinary or adverse actions during the prior year. According to the IRS report, "some of these employees had serious misconduct such as unauthorized access to tax return information, substance abuse, and sexual misconduct." Plain and simple: bureaucrats who fail to adhere to basic workplace standards of conduct should not be rewarded with taxpayer-funded bonuses.

Thankfully, your legislation would put an end to this irresponsible practice by putting the interests of taxpayers above unelected bureaucrats. Under the "Stop Improper Federal Bonuses Act," any federal employee who has been suspended for more than 14 days for violating agency policy would not be eligible for bonus payments or could be required to repay their bonus if found guilty of serious misconduct. In the private sector, workers with serious misconduct charges would not likely be eligible to earn a bonus, and it is only fair that public sector workers are held to that same standard.

NTU is pleased to support this good-government proposal and look forward to helping you achieve enactment of S. 2119.

Sincerely,

Thomas Aiello  
Policy and Government Affairs Associate