

Chairman Nelson, Ranking Member Collins, and other members of the Committee,

I am a victim of identity theft through tax fraud 3 years in a row. On March 26, 2012, I received a letter from the IRS informing me that I was a victim. That was the beginning of a long and frustrating journey that continues today.

In recent months, I have finally gotten the refunds for my 2010 and 2011 taxes. But I am still waiting to get a refund for my 2012 taxes. And I really could use that money. I am a cancer survivor. I was diagnosed with Lymphoma in 2005. I had breast cancer surgery last year and the Lymphoma has returned. I currently owe about \$4000 in medical bills.

The letter that I first received from the IRS informed me that I had been a victim of tax fraud for my 2010 and 2011 taxes. They said red flags were raised because of suspicious claims on the tax return that was submitted in my name. They also told me that it would take three months for them to process my case. I was told to print and mail my 2010 and 2011 tax returns and send some additional items. The IRS also said they would issue me a six digit PIN number later that year to use on my tax returns for the next three years. I'm still waiting for that.

The IRS also told me to file my case with local police, the Federal Trade Commission, and Equifax.

I did all that and more.

I called the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department and filed a report. They told me it just ends up in a file. I asked them about participating in the IRS Law Enforcement Assistance Program, or LEAP, a program that enables local law enforcement to more easily pursue identity theft cases. They had never heard of it. They said they would get back to me after looking into it, but I never heard back.

I had done my own taxes on Turbo Tax for my 2010 and 2011 taxes. But this year I decided to file my taxes with a specialist. I watched him e-file them on February 21st. A day later, the IRS contacted him to tell him that my tax return had already been filed again.

I once again went through the same process as the year before and compiled all of my paperwork. I called the IRS. They told me I should have had an alert on my file because there was an identity theft indicator on my 2010 and 2011 tax returns. I asked who it was that filed my taxes in 2011 and 2012 and who let this year's filing slip through. There has to be a record of who filed them. She could not tell me.

I later spoke with another woman at the IRS who told me it was my own fault that I hadn't received my refund and that I should have received a letter in the mail with my caseworker's name. When I told her to please reissue the letter because I never received it, she said it could not be reissued. She was quite angry with me and made me feel stupid and small because she said I was just one of many people dealing with this same problem. I was near tears on the phone.

Finally, a different woman from the IRS reached out and asked me to call her back at “12ish Mountain Time.” I could not because I was at work. She said that if she did not hear from me she would close my case. I spoke with another person in her office and asked for the woman to call me back. I never heard a thing.

I reached out to the Federal Trade Commission again. And the State Attorney’s Office. They said there was nothing they could do. I even reached out to the FBI. They told me they don’t deal with identity theft-related tax cases.

I reached out to news stations and have been interviewed for stories. I have called members of Congress. Senators Nelson and Rubio have responded to me, and Senator Nelson’s office is the first time anyone has legitimately offered any assistance.

I received a letter at the end of March this year from the IRS that they have verified my claim of identity theft for my 2012 taxes, that there is an identity theft indicator on my account, that no further action was needed on my part. But the letter still didn’t include an identity protection PIN. Even though I was promised one over a year ago. I’m afraid all of this will happen again next year if I don’t get a PIN.

I should never have to go through anything like this, nor should anyone else. I feel violated. It’s hard to concentrate in work. I am stressed constantly and have asked doctor for help to deal with these problems.

I have no idea how my information got out there. I have spent a lot of time in hospitals due to my health condition, so it’s possible my personal information was obtained there.

Because of all this, a stranger knows more about me than my friends and family. I hope you can do something to stop this.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my story, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.