

IRS News Release

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National Taxpayer Advocate Wants to Hear from You: Olson to Hold Public Forum on Taxpayer Service Needs in Red Oak, Iowa, on May 5

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WASHINGTON — National Taxpayer Advocate Nina E. Olson and Sen. Chuck Grassley, a member and former chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, will hold a public forum to discuss what taxpayers want and need from the IRS to comply with their tax obligations. Sen. Grassley is also currently the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The public forum will be held Thursday, May 5, at 8:30 a.m. central time at the YMCA in Red Oak, Iowa.

Members of the public and the media are invited to attend.

Building on initiatives already implemented, the Internal Revenue Service for the past two years has been developing a “Future State” plan that envisions how it will operate in five years and beyond. It is continuing to develop a path for how it gets from its “Current State” to the “Future State,” including refinements to the vision along the way. A central component of the plan is the creation of online taxpayer accounts as a convenient but non-exclusive channel through which taxpayers will be able to obtain information from and interact with the IRS.

In the National Taxpayer Advocate’s [2015 Annual Report to Congress](#), Ms. Olson expressed concerns about whether the IRS’s “Future State” plan adequately addresses taxpayer needs. She recommended the IRS solicit comments from taxpayers and tax professionals regarding the “Future State” plan, including their thoughts on the extent to which taxpayers will continue to need telephone and in-person assistance. To further public awareness and dialogue, she announced plans to hold a series of public forums around the country. The objective of the public forums is to ensure the “Future State” plan will better reflect the needs and preferences of U.S. taxpayers as they seek to comply with the tax code.

The May 5 public forum will feature an invited panel of representatives from the agricultural and local taxpayer communities, including the following:

Varel Bailey, President
Bailey Farms, Inc.

Tamara Borland, Director
Low Income Taxpayer Clinic, Iowa Legal Aid

Alvin LaMar, Enrolled Agent
Iowa Farm Business Association

Kristy Maitre, Tax Specialist
Agricultural Education & Studies, Iowa State University

Wendy Smith, VITA Program Coordinator
United Way of Wapello County

Members of the public will also have an opportunity to speak.

Ms. Olson will conduct the hearing in collaboration with Sen. Grassley, who represents Iowa in the United States Senate. The Senate Finance Committee, on which Senator Grassley serves, is responsible for, among other things, tax legislation and IRS oversight.

Local Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) staff will be available to talk with attendees about unresolved tax issues and help determine if their situation qualifies for TAS assistance. TAS generally is unable to assist taxpayers with return preparation questions, but can provide assistance to taxpayers who have already filed their returns with the IRS for the current or past years and are experiencing problems that meet its case-acceptance criteria.

The public forum will take place in the multipurpose room at the YMCA, 101 East Cherry Street, Red Oak, IA 51566.

For information about the forum, go to [TaxpayerAdvocate.irs.gov/public-forums](https://taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov/public-forums).

About the Taxpayer Advocate Service

The Taxpayer Advocate Service is an *independent* organization within the IRS that helps taxpayers and protects taxpayer rights. Your local advocate's number is in your local directory and at taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov. You can also call TAS toll-free at 1-877-777-4778. TAS can help if you need assistance resolving an IRS problem, if your problem is causing financial difficulty, or if you believe an IRS system or procedure isn't working as it should. And our service is free. For more information about TAS and your rights under the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, go to taxpayeradvocate.irs.gov. You can get updates on tax topics at facebook.com/YourVoiceAtIRS, [Twitter.com/YourVoiceatIRS](https://twitter.com/YourVoiceatIRS), and YouTube.com/TASNIA.