



June 28, 2016

Statement of Bill Cobb, H&R Block President & CEO:

“In the 16 months since Commissioner Koskinen first established this public-private partnership, much progress has been made to help prevent fraudsters from stealing taxpayer refunds. From improvements on information-sharing, to new authentication and security safeguards, to working to develop consistent regulatory and compliance structure, the progress is real. I applaud Commissioner Koskinen for his thoughtful leadership throughout this effort, and I applaud state officials and members of the industry for their collaboration and partnership in dealing with the multitude of issues related to tax refund fraud. Together, we have produced and executed actionable plans that are making a difference.

Still, while there has been progress, we cannot be satisfied. If we are to meet the fraudsters’ ever-evolving threats, our collective efforts must be one of continuous improvement and adaptation.

To this end, among the issues that still need to be adequately addressed, we need to take information-sharing to the next level with establishment of the Information Sharing and Analysis Center (ISAC). We should strive to have this done in time for Tax Season 2017. We also need to establish clear metrics by which all industry members will measure themselves against uniform, industry-wide standards. Again, both of these efforts need to be in place for the next tax season.

Our prevention efforts are only as strong as the weakest link. As a group, we have already demonstrated the great progress that can be achieved when we all work together. Now we just need to buckle down further to address the remaining challenges.

In closing, H&R Block is proud of its contributions to the IRS working groups and to the larger progress we’ve made in fighting fraud. My team and I look forward to the continued collaboration and partnership with this group, as together, we strive to better protect taxpayers in time for the next tax season. Thank you.”