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Sam Johnson statement at Ways and Means mark-up

U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson (TX-03) delivered the following remarks at today's Ways and Means mark-up.

Remarks as prepared for delivery:

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for bringing this measure before the committee.

This is a common-sense AND bipartisan measure to close a loophole that is costing American taxpayers billions of dollars.

Mr. Chairman, right now the IRS is providing the refundable child tax credit to those who are here illegally.

But don't take my word for it.

In a report issued last year by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration entitled, *Individuals Who Are Not Authorized to Work in the United States Were Paid \$4.2 Billion in Refundable Credits*, the IG said, "Although the law prohibits aliens residing without authorization in the United States from receiving most Federal public benefits, an increasing number of these individuals are filing tax returns claiming the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC)."

Mr. Chairman I would like to submit this "Highlights" one-pager from the IG for the record.

In response to the IG report, Senate Democrat Claire McCaskill has called on the IRS to stop such payments to individuals without Social Security Numbers.

In a letter to the IRS commissioner, the Senator wrote: "[I]f necessary, I am prepared to pursue legislation immediately to give the IRS the authority to stop improper payments before they are made. ... Wrongful payments of refundable tax credits should be easy to identify and stop. The

law is clear that individuals who are not authorized to work in the United States are not entitled to public benefits.”

Mr. Chairman I would like to submit the Senator’s press release and letter for the record.

Even the Administration supports preventing illegal immigrants from getting public benefits.

The President’s budget would -- as the *Washington Post* characterizes it -- “ramp up” funding for a program known as SAVE (Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements), which according to Homeland Security seeks to prevent “individuals from obtaining benefits they are not eligible to receive” by checking their immigration status.

So especially in light of this, I think the American people would be right to ask why wouldn’t my friends on the other side support this common-sense measure?

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