



AMERICAN CITIZENS ABROAD
EDUCATE, ADVOCATE AND INFORM

May 12, 2017

Rep. Mike Rogers [R-AL-3]

Rep. Lou Barletta [R-PA-11]

Rep. Matt Gaetz [R-FL-1]

Rep. Mo Brooks [R-AL-5]

Rep. Austin Scott [R-GA-8]

Rep. Trent Franks [R-AZ-8]

Rep. John Abney Culberson [R-TX-7]

Rep. Trent Kelly [R-MS-1]

Rep. Eric A. Crawford [R-AR-1]

Rep. Steve King [R-IA-4]

Dear Congressmen,

On behalf of the American Citizens Abroad, Inc. (ACA), a §501(c)(4) tax-exempt, non-profit, nonpartisan, volunteer organization, we are writing to express our concern over the bill, currently in Congress, known as The Border Wall Funding Act of 2017 (HR 1813) (“Act”).

Although the Act is intended to address the issue of foreign citizens from those Latin American and Caribbean countries listed in the Act who come to work in the United States and then send money back to their countries, the language of the Act does not limit its effect to just those foreign citizens in the United States. Instead, the Act would affect both U.S. and foreign citizens who receive money in the following countries: Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Cuba, the Cayman Islands, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, the Bahamas, Turks and Caicos, Jamaica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Aruba, Curacao, the British Virgin Islands, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Montserrat, Guadeloupe, Dominica, Martinique, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, or Argentina.



May 12, 2017

Page 2

Specifically, the Act proposes to amend the Electronic Fund Transfer Act, 15 U.S.C. 1693, such that:

“If the designated recipient of a remittance transfer is located in a foreign country described in subparagraph (B), a remittance transfer provider shall collect from the sender of such remittance transfer a remittance fee equal to 2 percent of the United States dollar amount to be transferred (excluding any fees or other charges imposed by the remittance transfer provider). Except as provided in subparagraph (C), such remittance fees shall be submitted to the Treasury to be expended for the purpose of improving border security.”

Both American citizens and foreign citizens living in Latin America and the Caribbean routinely receive money from the United States via remittances (international money transfers). The Act, in effect, would unfairly impose a two percent tax on all money transfers made from the United States to people located in Latin America and the Caribbean.

We believe strongly that the Act would be unfair in its application and pose a heavy burden on commerce. At the very least, we believe American citizens living in those countries listed, should not be subject to the effects of this Act, should it pass.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions about this, please do not hesitate to contact us at (410) 497-5947.

Sincerely,

Glen Frost

Assistant Legal Counsel, ACA

Marylouise Serrano

Executive Director, ACA

CC: Nina Olson, Taxpayer Advocate
Congresswoman Maloney, Co-Chair, Americans Abroad Caucus
Congressman Meadows, Co-Chair, Americans Abroad Caucus