



AMERICAN CITIZENS ABROAD
EDUCATE, ADVOCATE AND INFORM

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American Citizens Abroad (ACA) writes to Congress: American Overseas issues need attention not just during a pandemic.

ACA wrote to members of the US Senate and US House of Representatives reminding them that American overseas issues need to be addressed not just during this time of pandemic. [ACA's letter](#); addressed to Senators Feinstein (D-CA), Klobuchar (D-MN), Menendez (D-NJ) and Wyden (D-OR) in response to their letter to Secretary of the State Michael Pompeo asking that the US State Department ensure voting access for Americans overseas, and to Senator Markey (D-MA) and Congressman Castro (D-TX), in response to their proposed legislation to assist Americans overseas wishing to repatriate to the US during COVID-19, stresses that the issues facing Americans overseas have not been given the serious consideration they deserve. ACA acknowledges the efforts of these legislators to raise the awareness of the needs of the community overseas but highlights that it should not take a pandemic to do this.

“We have champions in the Senate and the House, who support efforts on behalf of Americans overseas however, the time has come for the entire Congress to be made aware of the problems and have these problems put on record so that legislative and regulatory solutions can be found,” said Marylouise Serrato, ACA Executive Director.

ACA’s letter highlights the tax and compliance problems facing the community, many of which are causing Americans overseas to lose their ability to work, lose their financial security, lose economic opportunities for themselves and the US, and perhaps most tragically, is leading some individuals to renounce their US citizenship simply to survive.

“The experience of overseas Americans with the CARES Act legislation clearly shows that the laws, regulations and systems governing Americans overseas need to be fixed and reformed,” said Jonathan Lachowitz, ACA Chairman – adding that, “the time to hold hearings has come and Congress has an obligation to do this for the 6 to 8 million Americans living overseas.”

ACA cites the over 15,000 messages that have gone into Congressional offices requesting hearings from ACA’s [write-in campaign](#) and the advocacy work that ACA has done in both Senate and House offices to raise the awareness of the issues. ACA and other overseas organizations advocate for the adoption of *Residence-based taxation (RBT)* for US citizens legitimately living and working overseas. RBT would exclude from US taxation income generated outside the US and not connected with US economic activity. In the past ten years, legislation such as the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and the renewed enforcement of the Foreign Bank Account Report (FBAR), has aggravated the situation for Americans overseas, forcing many to lose their foreign financial relationships – essentially leaving them without banking and investment accounts and costing them thousands in compliance costs as well as limiting their ability to create economic opportunity through business partnerships.

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