

S 676

Identity Theft and Tax Fraud Prevention Act of 2015

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Crime and Law Enforcement

Introduced: Mar 9, 2015

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance. (Mar 9, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/676>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Nelson, Bill [D-FL]

Party: Democratic • **State:** FL • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (9 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Brown, Sherrod [D-OH]	D · OH		Mar 9, 2015
Sen. Cardin, Benjamin L. [D-MD]	D · MD		Mar 9, 2015
Sen. Feinstein, Dianne [D-CA]	D · CA		Mar 9, 2015
Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Mar 9, 2015
Sen. Klobuchar, Amy [D-MN]	D · MN		Mar 9, 2015
Sen. Schumer, Charles E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Mar 9, 2015
Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]	D · CT		Apr 20, 2015
Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL]	D · IL		May 6, 2015
Sen. Casey, Robert P., Jr. [D-PA]	D · PA		Jun 17, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Finance Committee	Senate	Referred To	Mar 9, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Crime and Law Enforcement

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HR 3832	Related bill	May 17, 2016: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.
114 HR 3981	Related bill	Dec 4, 2015: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.
114 S 137	Related bill	Jan 8, 2015: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance. (Sponsor introductory remarks on measure: CR S103-104; text of measure as introduced: CR S104)

Identity Theft and Tax Fraud Prevention Act of 2015

Requires the Department of the Treasury to: (1) establish a plan to reduce the administrative time required to process and resolve cases of tax-related identity theft in connection with tax returns and refunds to no more than 90 days, on average; (2) ensure that taxpayers who have been adversely affected by identity theft have a single point of contact at the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); (3) issue a personal identification number to any individual requesting protection from identity theft-related fraud after such individual's true identity has been established and verified; (4) implement a program to prevent the processing of a tax return by an identity thief; (5) issue regulations that restrict the delivery or deposit of multiple tax refunds to the same individual in the same tax year; (6) notify a taxpayer if there has been an unauthorized use of such taxpayer's identity or if a person has been criminally charged for such unauthorized use; and (7) submit a report on options for creating a tax system that reduces burdens on taxpayers and decreases tax fraud through information matching. Imposes restrictions on the use of prepaid debit cards for tax refunds.

Amends the Public Health Service Act to require the Health Information Technology Committee to develop, incorporate, and report on a plan to provide for a reliable nationwide health information technology infrastructure that does not use a social security account number for data matching, coordination of benefits, billing, and research purposes.

Directs the Department of Health and Human Services to: (1) establish and implement procedures to eliminate the unnecessary collection, use, and display of social security account numbers of Medicare beneficiaries; (2) ensure that newly-issued Medicare identification cards meet certain security standards; and (3) establish a pilot program to evaluate the applicability of smart card technology to Medicare beneficiaries or providers and whether such cards would be effective in preventing Medicare fraud.

Amends the federal criminal code to prohibit the display, sale, or purchase of social security numbers without the consent of the account holder. Imposes criminal penalties for obtaining a social security number for purposes of locating or identifying an individual with the intent to physically injure, harm, or use the identity of an individual for any illegal purpose. Allows civil remedies to enjoin and recover losses from violations of this Act and sets forth civil penalties for such violations.

Amends the Internal Revenue Code to: (1) impose a criminal penalty for willful misappropriation of another person's taxpayer identity; (2) increase the civil and criminal penalties for unauthorized disclosure of taxpayer information by paid tax return preparers; (3) allow the use of an identifying number, instead of a social security number, for an employee on a W-2 form; and (4) impose a penalty on tax return preparers who fail to verify the identity of a taxpayer who is filing a tax return or claiming a refund.

Authorizes the IRS Commissioner to transfer appropriated funds to be used solely to prevent and resolve potential cases of tax fraud.

Directs the Commissioner to: (1) establish in the Criminal Investigation Division of the IRS the position of Local Law Enforcement Liaison to coordinate the investigation of tax fraud with state and local law enforcement agencies, and (2) establish a program to verify the identity of any individual opening an e-Services account.

Grants Treasury: (1) enhanced authority to regulate and sanction paid tax return preparers, and (2) access to information in the National Directory of New Hires for purposes of administering the tax code.

Actions Timeline

- **Mar 9, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
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