

August 14, 2020

The Honorable Steven Mnuchin
Secretary
The U.S. Department of Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin,

I write to you today to express my serious concern with the distribution of Economic Impact Payments (EIP), authorized through the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*, to people in my state of West Virginia. I have heard from nearly 6,700 constituents, many of which are social security and/or disability recipients, who have yet to receive their EIP over four months after these payments were authorized by Congress and signed into law. For these West Virginians, a program that was supposed to provide a lifeline during a healthcare pandemic and an economic crisis has become a headache. I urge you to work with my office to resolve these issues as soon as possible and deliver this long overdue assistance to these struggling families.

When Congress passed the *CARES Act*, we authorized a robust set of programs aimed at helping vulnerable Americans weather the new economic challenges presented by this unprecedented healthcare crisis. This included \$293 billion to ensure every American, making up to \$75,000 as an individual or \$150,000 for married couples, would receive immediate financial assistance. While I commend you for steering the federal government's massive effort to deliver over 159 million EIPs to impacted Americans, including 964,000 West Virginians, I remain concerned about the lack of attention that has been paid to all those who are still anxiously waiting today. Despite repeated attempts, my office has been unable to get status updates on the EIPs or satisfactory explanations for the delay from the Department of the Treasury (Department) or the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for thousands of West Virginians. As such, I worry that the Department may not grasp the scope and scale of this problem. It is not far out of the realm of possibility to believe that the actual number of West Virginians who have not received their EIP has eclipsed 10,000 people. For my state, which has roughly 1.5 million adults, that's a fairly sizeable portion of the population.

As we continue to debate an additional COVID-19 relief package, it is imperative that we address the underlying problems with this program before we invest hundreds of billions of additional taxpayer dollars into it. Both the House Democrats' *HEROES Act* and the Senate Republican's *HEALS Act* included at least \$300 billion for an additional round of EIP payments. In hope of working together to both resolve the current backlog of overdue payments and prevent

this from happening again in the future, I would appreciate your response to the following questions:

1. Where should I direct my constituents who are still waiting on their EIP payments and report that they are unable to get through to anyone via the phone or email regarding the status of their EIP?
2. In the event of a second round of EIPs, what should constituents do to make sure they receive the second round of EIP payment, when they have yet to receive the first?
3. If a constituent is deemed ineligible to receive an EIP, will the Department and/or the IRS notify the taxpayer with specifics as to why they are ineligible?

I, as well as thousands of West Virginians, thank you for your attention to this matter. If there is anything I can do to be of further assistance or if you would like to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Manchin III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

U.S. Senator Joe Manchin III