

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

January 25, 2011

**EITC Outreach In Your Congressional District**

Dear Colleague:

We are working with the Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") to reach millions of workers who are eligible for, but have failed to claim, the Earned Income Tax Credit ("EITC"). We hope that you can join us in this EITC outreach effort in the coming weeks.

Your participation in EITC outreach could make a significant financial difference for thousands of low-income households in your Congressional District, particularly as families struggle during the economic downturn. With the 2011 tax return filing season underway, it is our goal to make eligible individuals and families aware of the EITC so that they may properly claim this important tax benefit on their 2010 tax returns. Last year, nearly \$58 billion in EITC claims were made by over 25 million low- and middle-income working families. However, the IRS estimates that 20 to 25 percent of EITC-eligible workers, or 5-7 million people, fail to claim this tax benefit each year.

The EITC is available to working people with earned incomes of less than \$43,352 (\$48,362 married filing jointly). For the 2010 tax year, EITC amounts vary depending upon the number of children up to a maximum of \$5,666. (Last year, the average EITC was about \$2,100.) The EITC is refundable, meaning that it offsets any tax liability with the balance provided to the taxpayer in the form of a tax refund. General information on the EITC can be found on <http://www.eitc.irs.gov/central/abouteitc/> and state-by-state information can be found on <http://www.eitc.irs.gov/central/eitcstats/>.

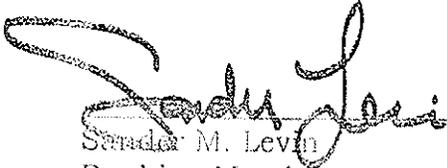
There are several specific actions each Member of the Congress can take in the coming weeks to enhance outreach to EITC-eligible working families. They include the following:

1. Congressional Press Release: Issue a press release to alert the local media and your constituents about the EITC and the availability of free tax assistance in the community.
2. Congressional Newsletter: Include in your next Congressional newsletter information about EITC eligibility.

3. Congressional Webpage: Post the location, phone number, and hours of local IRS offices on your Congressional webpage. Provide a link to the IRS "EITC Assistant" that can help constituents determine EITC eligibility.
4. IRS Events: Hold an EITC outreach event in your District in coordination with your local IRS officials and press. The IRS' annual EITC Awareness Day will be on **January 28, 2011**.
5. Community Meetings: Meet with community volunteer groups to support EITC awareness and tax return filing assistance.
6. TV/Radio: Appear in public service announcements and on talk shows promoting the EITC and urge non-claimants to seek assistance.

Over the years, we, as individual Members, have participated in events with IRS officials, given public service announcements, held community meetings, and included information regarding the EITC on our Websites and in our newsletters. These activities were beneficial to many of our constituents. We hope that you will engage in some of the above activities in your District to help increase awareness of this important Federal tax credit. If you would like further information on these events or additional information on the EITC, please feel free to call Karen McAfee (at 225-4021) on our staff.

Sincerely,

  
Sanders M. Levin  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means

  
John Lewis  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Oversight