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Congress may have more to say about how the IRS “runs its business” in upcoming years. Four new bills marked up and passed on April 13 by the Ways and Means Committee, the tax-law writing body of the House, would dictate IRS certain practices, if enacted.

Prior to the mark-ups, Ways and Means chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX) commented on the direction his committee was taking. “Americans send a significant portion of their hard-earned dollars to the IRS every April,” said Brady. “They deserve an IRS that is committed to delivering the highest level of customer service to American taxpayers.”

The four bills, all sponsored by Republicans, would restrict IRS hiring of ex-employees, limit bonuses to staffers, give Congress authority over spending of user fees and suspend IRS hiring of anyone with tax deficiencies, respectively. Here's a brief rundown.

1. Ensuring Integrity in the IRS Workforce Act of 2015 (H.R. 372): The first bill on this list, sponsored by Representative Kristi Noem (R-SD), would prohibit the IRS from rehiring an ex-employee who was fired for misconduct. “[This legislation] is a simple, bipartisan fix to a serious problem,” said Noem. “The bill does what the IRS bureaucracy in Washington won’t—it stops the IRS from rehiring former employees who had been fired for cause.”

2. IRS Bonuses Tied to Measurable Metrics (H.R. 4890): This bill is sponsored by Representative Pat Meehan (R-PA). It prevents the IRS from paying bonuses to employees until it institutes a policy prioritizing taxpayer services. “The IRS has

shown that it will prioritize bonuses over assisting taxpayers,” said Meehan. “This

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American people in its own funding. This legislation is about safeguarding the American taxpayer, making the IRS beholden to them and not the other way around.”

4. No Hires for the Delinquent IRS Act (H.R. 1206): Representative David Rouzer (R-NC), who does not serve on the Ways & Means Committee, is the sponsor of the final bill. It would suspend the hiring of any new IRS employee without certification that the new-hire has no serious tax delinquencies. “I commend Mr. Rouzer of North Carolina for helping to shine a light on the fact that some of the IRS’s own employees have serious delinquencies on their personal tax obligations,” said Brady. “This is outrageous and the American people deserve better. [This] legislation is an important step toward creating accountability and restoring the public’s trust in the IRS.”

Representative Sander Levin (D-MI), the highest-ranking Democrat on the committee, objected to the bills. He pointed out that they would further hamper the IRS’ ability to serve the public during a time when its budget has been cut and resources are strained. Levin argues that the proposed legislation would result in further budget cuts and even worse customer service for taxpayers.

The House is expected to vote on these four bills next week. Stay tuned for more developments.

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