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# Impeach IRS Chief, Say Republicans Alleging Lies, Obstruction

Lois Lerner won't be prosecuted, but House Republicans have introduced a [resolution](#) to impeach IRS Commissioner John Koskinen instead. Jenny Beth Martin, of Tea Party Patriots said this: "It's about damn time." The House members accuse the IRS chief of making false statements under oath and failing to comply with a subpoena for evidence. The impeachment resolution was introduced by House Oversight Committee Chairman Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah) and 18 others.

It isn't as though the Republicans hadn't foreshadowed this. Months ago, Mr. Chaffetz and others penned a [long letter to President Obama](#). The letter requests President Obama to remove the IRS Commissioner for obstructing the congressional investigation into the IRS's targeting of conservative groups. That letter had no effect and now, House Republicans want action. Some Senators are getting in on the action too.

The [resolution](#) claims that the IRS chief violated the public trust by:

- Failing to comply with a subpoena resulting in destruction of key evidence. Commissioner Koskinen failed to locate and preserve IRS records in accordance with a congressional subpoena and an internal preservation order. The IRS erased 422 backup tapes containing as many as 24,000 of Lois Lerner's emails – key pieces of evidence that were destroyed on Koskinen's watch.
- Failing to testify truthfully and provided false and misleading information. Commissioner Koskinen testified the IRS turned over all emails relevant to the congressional investigation, including all of Ms. Lerner's emails. When the agency determined Ms. Lerner's emails were missing, Commissioner Koskinen testified the emails were unrecoverable. These statements were false.
- Failing to notify Congress that key evidence was missing. The IRS knew Ms. Lerner's emails were missing in February 2014. In fact, they were not missing; the IRS destroyed the emails on March 4, 2014. The IRS did not notify Congress the emails were missing until June 2014 – four months later, and well after the White House and the Treasury Department were notified.



*IRS Commissioner John Koskinen testifies before the Senate Judiciary's Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts Subcommittee in the Dirksen Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill July 29, 2015 in Washington, DC. Koskinen continued to face questions about alleged IRS targeting of political groups for extra scrutiny when applying for tax-exempt status. (Photo by Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images)*

As Sen. Pat Roberts (R-Kan.) put it, the Obama administration used the IRS as a political tool to actively work against conservative groups. Roberts claims that the IRS suppressed electoral activities of groups that did not agree with the Obama administration's views. Speaking at a Senate Finance Committee meeting, [Sen. Roberts said](#):

- 6 In my reading of the factual information presented in the report, there was systematic suppression of the free speech rights of these organizations, which is sadly ongoing. The end result has been a grave reduction in the taxpaying public's faith in the agency – This is a horrible situation, compounded by the agency's half-hearted efforts to locate and preserve records relevant to this situation.”

Considering the committee's [report](#) that detailed its investigation into the IRS's treatment of organizations applying for tax-exempt status, Sen. Roberts questioned Commissioner Koskinen on IRS accountability: “Has anyone involved in this been fired, fined, reprimanded, denied a bonus, slapped on the wrist, or even received a stern ‘talk to?’” Sen. Roberts' full prepared remarks are [here](#), and they include some zingers:

6 In fact, the IRS saw fit to mislead the committee about the existence of backup data, and sat on the information about computer crashes and lost backup tapes for weeks. Mr. Koskinen, you have been instrumental in this decay of the reputation and standing of the IRS. You bear a direct responsibility, particularly in your less-than cooperative approach in responding to the oversight requests of this committee. Mr. Koskinen, given that American citizens were targeted for extra scrutiny in the exemption application process, thereby denying them the First Amendment rights – a tactic comparable to what is seen in a totalitarian country – take your pick, has anyone involved in this been fired, fined, reprimanded, denied a bonus, slapped on the wrist, or even received a stern ‘talk to’?”

Earlier this year, Sen. Roberts introduced a bicameral bill with Sen. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), Congressman Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), and Congressman Peter Roskam (R-Ill.). The [Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act](#) would stop further attempts by IRS to exploit bureaucratic loopholes to restrict the free speech rights of the same types of tax-exempt social welfare organizations victimized in the [IRS political targeting scandal](#). Sen. Roberts also introduced the [Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act](#), to require federal employees to be current on their federal income taxes. It would also prevent federal personnel who are delinquent in paying a federal tax liability from receiving a bonus or cash award. According to the Treasury Inspector General, close to \$3 million was awarded to IRS staff with violations on their records.

As for the move to impeach Commissioner Koskinen, not everyone agrees. Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-Md.), Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, issued a statement [condemning the Republican impeachment resolution](#).

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