



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Bill Mason

Telephone: (865) 546-7311

Knoxville, Tennessee Lawyer Selected for IRS Taxpayer Advocacy Panel

William E. Mason, a Knoxville lawyer was recently selected by the U.S. Treasury Department to serve a three-year term on the nationwide Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP). Panel members listen to taxpayers, identify issues and make suggestions for improving Internal Revenue Service (IRS) service and customer satisfaction.

Mason, a lawyer with more than 40 years of practice, is one of 74 volunteers serving on the panel. He will represent Tennessee taxpayers as well as work on national issues. On his selection, Mason, a Knoxville resident, said, "TAP provides an outside perspective to the IRS, emphasizing the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. TAP has triggered useful systemic change in the fair and effective administration of the Nation's voluntary tax system. I want to make a similar contribution on behalf of Tennessee taxpayers."

TAP members volunteer 200 to 300 hours yearly to the panel. Members work with IRS executives on priority topics and also serve as a conduit for grassroots issues between the public and the IRS. Some of the professions represented on the panel include teachers, engineers, public administrators, home makers, accountants, law enforcement officers, professors, retired military, and small business owners.

"The new panel members play a critical role by helping to ensure the IRS provides quality taxpayer service to all taxpayers," said Nina Olson, IRS National Taxpayer Advocate and head of the Taxpayer Advocate Service. "As the IRS remains committed to improving services and assistance to taxpayers, the input from the citizen volunteers at TAP has never been more important. The Taxpayer Advocate Service is committed to making sure the IRS seeks out and considers panel member's views on key initiatives impacting taxpayers before decisions are made." The IRS has made a commitment to listen to ideas from TAP members.

Some of the big picture issues that have been raised include, for example: IRS user fees adopted to fill funding gaps may impact voluntary compliance; IRS's virtually automatic 501(c)(3) tax-exempt recognition invites non-compliance; IRS guidance on levy of retirement accounts does not adequately protect taxpayer rights and conflicts with retirement security public policy; and IRS's Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) tax administration compromises individual taxpayer rights and burdens employers.

Mason is a shareholder at Kennerly Montgomery, a 100-year old law firm in Knoxville. He represents employers with regard to 401(k), pension and retirement plans, and other health and welfare employee benefits. He also represents non-profit organizations, particularly those involved in commercialization and technology transfer. He is a member of the American, Tennessee, and Knoxville Bar Associations, and a 1974 graduate of Harvard Law School.

Mason serves on the Board of Directors for the Legacy Parks Foundation, a charity developing local parks, and the Education Subcommittee for the United Way of Knoxville. He is the past Chair of the Hillcrest Healthcare Communities Board of Directors. He reads to kindergartners at Christenberry Elementary, a Knoxville inner city school.

Taxpayers can contact Mason and the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel by calling 1-888-912-1227 or via the Internet at www.improveirs.org. Taxpayers can also write to the Panel at: Taxpayer Advocacy Panel, 801 Broadway, Stop 22, Nashville, TN 37203. 615-250-5000.

Mason can be reached at (865) 546-7311, wemason@kmfpc.com. Taxpayers may write to him at Kennerly Montgomery, 550 W. Main Street, Suite 400, Knoxville, TN 37902.