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DC Court Decision on IRS “Unconscionable”

Statement by Jenny Beth Martin, co-founder of Tea Party Patriots

ATLANTA, GA – Yesterday, the U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia dismissed almost all counts brought by more than 40 tea party groups against the IRS in two lawsuits because the IRS had granted the groups their tax-exempt status in the interim.

Today, **Jenny Beth Martin, co-founder of Tea Party Patriots**, who are engaged in their own lawsuit against the IRS over their illegal targeting of tea party groups for additional scrutiny, issued the following statement:

“Within days of the Citizens United ruling in January 2010, which strengthened free speech rights and the freedom for the people to criticize the government, the Internal Revenue Service – the branch of government most feared by American citizens, and, therefore, best suited to act punitively on behalf of a lawless regime – launched a program that systematically targeted what it believed to be “enemies” of the Obama Administration. That scandal – which went on for several years – was admitted by the IRS and by the person most responsible for the agency’s misconduct, Lois Lerner.

Several dozen victims of the targeting sued the IRS and individual IRS agents for violation of their constitutional rights. Yesterday a federal judge sided with the IRS and dismissed the claims of our fellow citizens and patriots. Amazingly, the Court’s ruling acknowledges the illegal activity by the IRS – but nonetheless concluded that because the IRS says it has discontinued its targeting, the case is “moot.”

We are dismayed, disappointed, and disheartened that the IRS would be allowed to get away with not just infringing on the rights of American citizens, but bulldozing them, casting aside any sense of propriety or privacy in its years-long effort to suppress the Obama Administration’s political opposition.

Tea Party Patriots – while not a plaintiff in the lawsuits – was a victim of the IRS targeting, having been subjected to a delay of more than three years in obtaining its tax exempt status, merely because of our name and beliefs.

The Court’s decision not to sanction either the IRS or the individual agents because it and they had taken “remedial measures” is unconscionable.

Under this view of the law, Al Capone need not have been arrested, prosecuted and convicted; he merely need have surrendered and promised to never cheat on his taxes again.

It is wholly unacceptable simply to accept the IRS’s hollow promises as “remedial measures” in the eyes of the law. When the IRS demands to know the content of people’s prayers, among other outrageous misconduct we have now learned the IRS engaged in during its persecution of tea party groups, a line has been crossed. Forgive us for not taking the Obama Administration at its word when it says it won’t happen again, which is what the Court has asked us to believe.

This Administration is out of control, and has shown time and again it has zero respect for the law or the Constitution. Sadly, the Court’s ruling will do nothing to discourage such behavior.”

In February, the Tea Party Patriots were granted their tax-exempt status after years of no action the day before Jenny Beth Martin was scheduled to testify before a House Committee on the issue.

Tea Party Patriots is a national grassroots coalition with more than 3,400 locally organized chapters and more than 15 million supporters nationwide. Tea Party Patriots is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to advancing personal freedom, economic freedom, and a debt-free future. Visit Tea Party Patriots online at www.TeaPartyPatriots.org.

For further information or to schedule an interview with Jenny Beth Martin, please contact Mike Rudin with Shirley & Banister Public Affairs at (703) 739-5920 or (800) 536-5920.

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