

Sen. Johnson: Introduces bill to help victims of identity theft

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Legislation inspired by central Wisconsin couple's decades-long ordeal

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) introduced the Social Security Identity Defense Act Thursday to require the IRS to notify citizens when the federal government becomes aware of an attempt to steal their social security number.

“It is unacceptable for the IRS to withhold information from citizens whose Social Security numbers have been stolen and used fraudulently,” Sen. Johnson said. “This commonsense legislation will help ensure victims are not left in the dark and that they can take the steps necessary to fix the damage and prevent further consequences.”

Sen. Johnson was made aware of the issue after speaking with constituents Debi and Robert Guenterberg, a couple who have had their lives seriously affected because of social security number fraud. You can learn more about the Guenterberg’s story in the video below, and text of the bill is attached.

[CLICK TO PLAY](#)

Background on the Social Security Identity Defense Act

- Requires the IRS, if it determines there is reason to believe there has been fraudulent use of a SSN on a tax return, to send a notice to the victim. Currently, there is no such requirement for IRS to notify identity theft victims when it discovers identity theft.

- Requires the Social Security Administration, if it determines there is reason to believe there has been a fraudulent use of a SSN, to send a notice to the employer.
- Adds tax crimes to the Aggravated Identity Theft Statute and imposes a civil monetary penalty against those who use or accept SSNs known to be fraudulently used for tax-related identity theft.