

Greetings,

I received the recent email from Senator Burdick regarding Oregon COVID-19 responses.

I am a CPA and I prepare tax returns for a living. I am also self-employed.

As such there are a couple issues that need to be addressed.

1) Self-employed people usually ARE NOT eligible for unemployment benefits. We are not allowed to pay into the system and we are not eligible to apply for benefits. The rationale is that since we are self-employed, losing an "employer" [client] won't harm us because we can just go out and find a replacement.

Well, that may or may not be true in normal times.

It is most certain NOT true now, when so many businesses are closed and so many individuals are being laid off or furloughed.

Everyone is expecting a cashflow crunch to start within the next month or so.

Therefore legislation is needed to extend unemployment benefits to self-employed people.

2) Tax filing day extended to July 15th:

This is welcome news. It means that we tax preparers will not have to be working til 2 or 3:00 AM every day for the next 4 weeks.

Oh, but wait.. Here comes the Oregon Department of Revenue who says "We are not extending the date for filing the Oregon return. We sticking with April 15th."

This is just plain stupid. When a tax return is prepared, we prepare the federal one first, and all the states and local returns follow it. They all key off of the federal figures, so to create a situation that requires us to still prepare Oregon tax returns is inefficient and a waste of time.

It does create a wonderful financial opportunity for the state of Oregon to hit up lots of taxpayers with late-filing penalties.

People who do their own taxes are very likely to NOT file an Oregon-only extension in April. They are going to simply postpone bothering with the whole thing until July. Then they are going to file their returns and get a nasty-gram from Oregon assessing late-filing penalties.

Just exactly **not** the kind of financial hit our households need in a time of crisis.

The ODR's response shows that they are simply out-of-touch with reality.

Please help.

Very, very sincerely,

Joan

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