

Dear Friend,

With the deadline to file income taxes just days away, many of my constituents have recently been hit with the harsh reality of living on Long Island: we pay some of the highest taxes in the nation.

Here are some of the ways I'm working in Congress to reduce your tax burden:

- Our federal tax code does not take regional differences in the cost of living into account. Expenses like housing prices, energy costs, and even groceries can vary greatly as you travel across the country. And as Long Islanders know – we are on the high end. That's why your income doesn't go as far on Long Island as it might in another part of the country. Despite that, Long Islanders pay the higher taxes on that income. I've introduced the Tax Equity Act, legislation that will adjust your federal income taxes to reflect the differences in the cost of living across the country. If my bill becomes law, a Long Island family might be able to move to a lower income tax bracket because their cost of living is much higher than that of people in lower cost areas.
- Another way I'm working to lower your taxes is by reducing the burden caused by the unfair Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT). Last year, I introduced the Homeowners Property Tax Relief Act, legislation that would allow families to deduct their property taxes from their AMT liability. The AMT was enacted to target the wealthiest Americans. However, it was created in 1969 and has not been adjusted to reflect changes in inflation like the regular tax code. Every year I also support legislation to adjust the AMT to reflect inflation, protecting thousands of Long Island families from being hit by this tax.
- Finally, I want to remind you about the tax credits you can apply for as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Recovery Act created new tax credits for first-time homebuyers and people who make energy efficiency improvements to their existing residence. It also included benefits for families with a student in college and for those facing unemployment.

For more information on these tax credits and to learn about my legislation to help reduce the tax burden on Long Island families, visit my website at <http://israel.house.gov>.

Sincerely,

Steve Israel
Member of Congress

P.S. This Monday, April 12, at 5:30 PM I will be hosting an Identity Theft Workshop with the Bethpage Federal Credit Union. Join us at 233 South Research Plaza in Central Islip to learn how to keep yourself safe from becoming a victim as well as how to resolve the problems associated with identity theft. To RSVP, please call 631-951-2210 or email BethG@mail.house.gov.