

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 21, 2010

The Honorable Barney Frank
Chairman
Committee on Financial Services
2129 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Spencer Bachus
Ranking Member
Committee on Financial Services
B371A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frank and Ranking Member Bachus:

As Co-Chairs of the Americans Abroad Caucus, we write to urge a timely hearing about reports of American citizens living overseas being denied access to U.S. banking institutions. The Caucus was contacted by many Americans living abroad who have been denied new accounts or had accounts that have existed for some years terminated, with the U.S. banks citing current U.S. regulations, namely the "Know Your Customer" requirements of the Patriot Act, as the reason. We also have heard from many overseas Americans that foreign banks are refusing American clients because of potential legal and administrative costs to comply with newly adopted measures in the Qualified Intermediary Rules. This could leave Americans abroad with no place to bank.

Our efforts to resolve these issues stretch across two Administrations. In the 110th Congress, we sent a letter to the Treasury Department to make sure they were aware of and taking action on the issue of American banks rejecting American customers living abroad. In the 111th Congress, we again made the Caucus's concerns over a large number of American citizens residing abroad being denied accounts with American banks and with the new proposed Qualified Intermediary (QI) regulations that went into effect January 1, 2010 known to Secretary Geithner. Each time, we were reassured that no current federal regulations or financial law should make it impossible for Americans living abroad to access U.S. financial services.

Despite these assurances, we continue to receive reports from many overseas Americans that these problems persist. We look forward to working with you to address the issue and find out the specific steps the Treasury Department will take to ensure taxpaying American citizens living abroad are given access to the same banking services available to all Americans.

Sincerely,


CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress


JOE WILSON
Member of Congress