From: Andrew Pearce
To: Preston Christie A
Subject: Public comments on Form 990
Date: Friday, September 11, 2015 8:31:47 PM

Thank you for giving the public a chance to comment on this important issue.

No doubt there are many churches in the U.S. that exist to provide spiritual guidance to their followers. But its obvious that many so called "Churches" are nothing more than a front for scam artists who seek to prey on vulnerable people. These people are often elderly or lonely people, or people with limited financial means. It is sickening to see some of the tactics used by some of these self-described "pastors" seeking donations for highly dubious activities. One well-reported cased described a pastor who wanted people to send money to buy him a plane. I doubt very much if that is part of God's plan.

The role of government should not to enable these scam artists by looking the other way and pretending that their motives are good and just because religion is involved. The IRS has an obligation to audit the activities of every church who enjoys a tax exemption and make sure that everything is above board and complies with the law. All non-profit organizations should be treated equally, regardless of whether they espouse an atheist position, or a religious position. Currently the IRS singles out churches for privileged treatment by exempting them from the disclosure requirements all other 501(c)(3) organizations must comply with, or lose their exemption. Taxpayers, who are subsidizing tax-exempt groups, have a right to know what entities are exempt from taxation and to review general financial disclosures. The privilege of not being taxed must come with some measures of accountability. Please make churches conform to the same IRS requirements as all other 501(c)(3) groups. At a minimum, the IRS should require any organizations that claim to be religious organizations, to file an annual notice with the IRS that they are claiming tax exemption.

Sincerely
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