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IRS Urged to Scrutinize Navy Veterans Group

There has been a chorus of calls for the IRS to launch investigations into the fundraising activities of a Navy Veterans Association. Already 4 states have begun looking more closely at the US Navy Veterans Association (USNVA). The latest voice to join the calls for more intense scrutiny of the association is Sen. Jim Webb (D-Virginia) who sent a letter to IRS Commissioner Doug Shulman urging the agency to take prompt action in investigating 'the legitimacy, fundraising activities and expenditures' of the association on behalf of veterans. The US Navy Veterans Association enjoys tax-exempt status as a non-profit making organization.

Webb, a former US Navy secretary, also went to the extent of asking the Federal Veterans Administration to remove the US Navy Veterans Association from its online directory of veterans services organizations because of the questionable nature of the association's legitimacy.

Webb's letter to Shulman came shortly after Gov. Bob McDonnell confirmed that the Virginia consumer affairs agency had launched investigations into the Navy Veterans Association to determine if it has violated the state's charitable solicitation law. The letter also highlighted concerns over a 2009 tax return filed by the Virginia chapter of US Navy Vets Association in which the organization reported providing services to more than 2.2 million individuals. But according to Webb's letter, "there is little evidence of services being provided on such a vast scale".

Another factor that raises suspicion over the Navy Vets legitimacy is the fact that the people who are supposedly members of USNVA's various boards of directors could not be contacted because "addresses and other information have not been accurately documented in tax filings," according to Webb's letter.

On its part, many of the USNVA's representatives have criticized the reports questioning its legitimacy. However, they have not provided much evidence to support the contrary since the St. Petersburg Times published an investigation into the Association and its former Florida-based director, Bobby Thompson in March.

Thompson, who last year was the Association's director, gave \$67,500 to Virginia's politicians that included \$55,500 to the Attorney General, Ken Cuccinelli and \$5,000 to Gov. McDonnell,

who were both running for election at the time. Since the questions arose over the USNVA's legitimacy, McDonnell has given away his \$5,000 to another veterans association but Cuccinelli has not followed suit, stating that he does not presume that Thompson is guilty of anything. He went on to further state his willingness to give the money to a military support organization if Thompson was found to be wrong in what he did.

Darrin T. Mish is a veteran, nationally recognized tax attorney who has focused on providing IRS help to taxpayers for over a decade. He regularly travels the country training other attorneys, CPAs and enrolled agents on how to handle their toughest cases with the IRS. He is highly ranked among the top attorneys in the country, with an AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell and a perfect 10 on Avvo.com. Martindale-Hubbell has also honored him with a listing in their Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers. He is a member of the American Society of IRS Problem Solvers and the Tax Freedom Institute. With clients on every continent but Antarctica, he has what it takes to solve your IRS problems no matter where you live in the world. If you would like more information about his practice and how he can help you, please call his office at (813) 229-7100 or toll free at 1-888-GET-MISH.