

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 14, 2015

Chairman Chuck Grassley
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building 20510
Washington, D.C. 20510-6050

Ranking Member Patrick Leahy
U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building 20510
Washington, D.C. 20510-6050

Chairman Grassley & Ranking Member Leahy,

Thank you for holding a hearing on April 15, 2015 regarding the abuses occurring in the federal civil asset forfeiture system. As you know, current federal forfeiture laws create a financial incentive to pursue profit over the fair administration of justice, facilitate the circumvention of state laws intended to protect citizens from abuse, encourage the violation of due process and property rights of Americans, and disproportionately impact people of color and those with modest means. For these reasons, we truly appreciate the Committee taking the torch to offer additional light on a legal process that infringes on the property rights and due process of Americans.

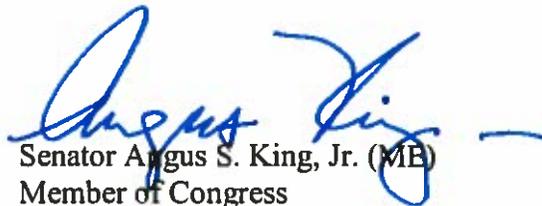
We introduced the Fifth Amendment Restoration Act of 2015 (FAIR Act) to reform our civil forfeiture laws. We have been heartened to see the positive reaction within the public, in the press and now in Congress to reforming these laws. While the Committee continues its efforts to build upon the bipartisan support in Congress, we ask that you pursue federal forfeiture reforms that embrace the principles contained in the FAIR Act such as: eliminating the profit incentive by shifting forfeiture funds to the General Treasury Fund, respecting the principles of federalism by eliminating equitable sharing, ensuring due process and property rights are protected, and increasing transparency and Congressional oversight.

Although there are legitimate uses of criminal forfeiture, the use of civil forfeiture to go after property without charging property owners with crimes should not be accepted. We appreciate your consideration of this matter and hope to work with the Committee in the future to ensure constitutionally guaranteed due process and property rights are protected.

Sincerely,



Senator Rand Paul (KY)
Member of Congress



Senator Augustus S. King, Jr. (ME)
Member of Congress



Senator Mike Crapo (ID)
Member of Congress



Rep. Tim Walberg (MI-07)
Member of Congress



Rep. Keith Ellison (MN-5)
Member of Congress



Rep. Scott Garrett (NJ-5)
Member of Congress



Rep. Tony Cardenas (CA-29)
Member of Congress

*Cc: Senator Hatch, Senator Sessions, Senator Graham, Senator Cornyn, Senator Lee, Senator Cruz,
Senator Flake, Senator Perdue, Senator Tillis, Senator Feinstein, Senator Schumer, Senator Durbin,
Senator Whitehouse, Senator Klobuchar, Senator Franken, Senator Coons, Senator Blumenthal*