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| **From:** | Barbara Sabo |
| **To:** | Preston Christie A |
| **Subject:** | IMPT: Comments re religious exemption, Form 990 |
| **Date:** | Saturday, September 12, 2015 6:11:50 PM |
| **Importance:** | High |

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Dear Ms. Preston,
Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the the fact that churches and religious organizations currently do not even have to send a notice to the IRS that they are claiming a 990 filing exemption. This is an atrocious situation, taking into consideration that so many churches and their leaders have been caught using donations---donations given in good faith to support charitable activities---to support their own flamboyant life styles. At this point in time, any group that claims it is religious avoids all public transparency and accountability.

This is precisely the type of lack of oversight that allows for widespread abuse, preying upon vulnerable populations, and fraud. The IRS must stop privileging churches at public expense.

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.

Best regards,
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