

February 11, 2014, 11:41 AM ET

Camp: IRS Targeted Established Conservative Groups for Audits, Too

By John D. McKinnon

A Republican House committee chairman said the Internal Revenue Service targeted tax-exempt conservative groups for audits, widening the scope of GOP ire over the agency's oversight of political activities.

House Democrats pushed back, saying Republicans were seeking to use the IRS controversy to score political points with their conservative base in an election year.

The IRS has been under scrutiny since an [inspector general's report last May](#) found that the agency had targeted conservative groups for lengthy and heavy-handed review of their applications to become tax-exempt organizations under section 501(c) 4 of the tax code. The controversy led to significant management shakeups at the IRS and generated a slew of congressional investigations, some of which are still going on.

On Tuesday, House Ways and Means Chairman **Dave Camp** (R., Mich.) said his committee's continuing investigation has found that the IRS also singled out established conservative tax-exempt groups for audits.

"We now know that the IRS targeted not only right-leaning applicants, but also right-leaning groups that were already operating as 501(c)(4)s," Mr. Camp said in a statement. "At Washington, DC's direction, dozens of groups operating as 501(c)(4)s were flagged for IRS surveillance, including monitoring of the groups' activities, websites and any other publicly available information. Of these groups, 83% were right-leaning. And of the groups the IRS selected for audit, 100% were right-leaning."

[More In IRS](#)

[Statement on Delay in Some Employers' Health-Insurance Mandate](#)

[Republicans Focus Anew on IRS Scandal](#)

[House GOP Seizes on Treasury Email About Nonprofits](#)

[Rep. Camp Seeks to Halt IRS Curbs on Some Groups' Political Activities](#)

[IRS Funding Takes Hit in Spending Bill](#)

Mr. Camp spoke at a meeting where the committee was expected to vote to delay implementation of Obama administration rules that GOP lawmakers say would unfairly restrict political activity by conservative groups. The Democratic-run Senate appears unlikely to go along.

In response, the committee's top Democrat said Republicans continue to exaggerate the matter to suit their political purposes.

"Instead of this prestigious committee using its broad jurisdiction to address critical issues that confront us, it has been consumed by a tireless effort by Republicans to find political scandal, regardless of what the truth

holds, as they look toward the November election,” said Rep. **Sander Levin** (D., Mich.).

He also chided Republicans for seeking to delay the regulations, noting that “what really remains hidden are donors to groups pouring millions of dollars into campaign advertising.”

Follow [@wsjwashington](#) on Twitter

Copyright 2014 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. Distribution and use of this material are governed by our [Subscriber Agreement](#) and by copyright law. For non-personal use or to order multiple copies, please contact Dow Jones Reprints at 1-800-843-0008 or visit www.djreprints.com