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## Trump Replaces IRS Commissioner Billy Long with Iceland Ambassadorship

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On August 8, 2025, President Donald Trump removed former U.S. Representative Billy Long as Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) less than two months after his Senate confirmation, appointing him instead as ambassador to Iceland. The decision, reported by The New York Times and confirmed by a White House official speaking anonymously, reflects ongoing turmoil at the IRS and raises questions about leadership stability within a critical federal agency.

Long, confirmed by a 53-44 Senate vote on June 12, 2025, faced scrutiny over his lack of tax administration experience and ties to a firm promoting fraudulent pandemic-era tax credits. In a statement on X, Long expressed enthusiasm for his new role, saying, “It is an honor to serve my friend President Trump and I am excited to take on my new role as the ambassador to Iceland. I am thrilled to answer his call to service and deeply committed to advancing his bold agenda. Exciting times ahead!” Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent will serve as acting IRS Commissioner until a permanent replacement is named, according to the White House official.

The IRS has faced significant instability, with Long being the sixth leader in 2025 alone, marking him as the shortest-tenured Senate-confirmed commissioner since the position’s creation in 1862. Prior to Long’s appointment, the agency cycled through four acting leaders, including one who resigned over a controversial data-sharing deal between the IRS and the Department of Homeland Security’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and another ousted after a dispute between former Trump adviser Elon Musk and Bessent. These rapid leadership changes highlight challenges in maintaining consistent governance within the IRS.

Long’s tenure coincided with substantial workforce reductions, driven by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), led by Musk. The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) reported a drop from 103,000 IRS employees in January to 77,000 by May 2025, primarily through DOGE’s deferred resignation program, aligning with Trump’s goal to reduce federal bureaucracy. These cuts have raised concerns about the agency’s ability to manage tax season effectively, a critical function for collecting approximately \$5 trillion annually, which funds 96% of federal operations.

During his 2011–2023 tenure in Congress, representing Missouri’s 7th District, Long co-sponsored legislation to abolish the IRS, an agency he later led. His post-Congress work with a firm distributing the Employee Retention Credit (ERC), later deemed fraudulent by then-Commissioner Daniel Werfel, drew Democratic criticism. Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon, ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee, called for a criminal investigation into Long’s ties to alleged tax credit scams, claiming firms linked to Long misled investors into spending millions on invalid credits.

The decision to reassign Long to an ambassadorship, while Bessent assumes interim leadership, underscores the administration’s prioritization of loyalty and rapid policy shifts. As the IRS navigates these changes, the focus remains on ensuring accountability and

efficiency in tax administration, critical for maintaining public trust and fiscal stability. An IRS spokesperson referred inquiries to the Treasury Department, which has not yet commented.