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D.C. Council Member Barry Slapped with Tax Lien

For a man who serves on the finance committee overseeing the expenditure of billions of tax dollars, it's incredulous that Marion Barry cannot keep his own tax liability current. According to the District of Columbia Office of the Recorder of Deeds, the IRS has filed a tax lien against Barry for unpaid taxes of \$3,200 in 2010. This tax lien is not the first. There was another one prior to this filed two years ago for \$15,000 unpaid taxes between 2005 and 2008.

On top of these two liens, former mayor Barry pleaded guilty to misdemeanor in another case involving more than \$500,000 in unpaid taxes derived from his earnings as a consultant from 1999 to 2004. In March 2006, Barry was sentenced to three years' probation as a result. The latest lien was worded in a similar way as the last one – "As provided by ... the Internal Revenue Code, we are giving a notice that taxes (including interest and penalties) have been assessed against the following named taxpayer (referring to Barry). We have made a demand for payment, but it remains unpaid."

Last year, the IRS filed tax liens against about 1.1 million taxpayers. Pete Sepp, vice president of the National Taxpayers Union said, "When it comes to tax liens, the IRS is not always on the side of angels, nor is it completely unheard of for the tax agency to pursue high-profile figures."

Ironically, Mr. Barry serves on the D.C. Council Committee on Finance and Revenue, which is responsible for taxation and revenue matters.

Mr. Barry's more recent tax troubles haven't impacted his criminal tax case. In 2009, prosecutors asked US Magistrate judge Deborah A. Robinson to send Barry to jail and revoke his probation. Prosecutors based their motion on the fact that Barry continually failed to file his own tax returns even after pleading guilty to misdemeanor in 2005. But the judge rejected the

motion and instead extended Barry's probation to March 2011. Court records show that Barry's wages were garnished to pay for his tax debts. Besides this, Barry also got into trouble with his own council colleagues last year for using his position to land a contract for his girlfriend and trying to cover up the investigations into the matter.

Nevertheless despite all his problems, Barry easily won re-election in 2008. Said Barry, "I've committed myself to bringing hope, resources and a big vision to the people of Washington, D.C. In these 31 years of public service, my work has touched every citizen, directly or indirectly, in the District of Columbia in a positive way."