



## Welcome to Protected Tomorrows TODAY™

### This Week at Protected Tomorrows®

Ok, enough snow already! We have record breaking snow fall this season. It is beautiful, and the shoveling IS good exercise. Those of you in warm climates don't know what you are missing! What we don't want is anyone missing his/her tax rebate if they have money coming. This issue will focus on the tax rebates to be distributed in the coming months. We will review the basic rules for the rebates, so that if you should be filing a tax return in order to receive the rebate, you will be doing so.

*Mary Anne Ehlert*  
*President, Protected Tomorrows, Inc.*

### The Tax Rebate – Will YOU or YOUR FAMILY get one?

Legislation has been signed, so that tax rebates will be received by millions of Americans. It is important to know how this legislation will impact you and those you love. Many individuals who receive disability benefits as their only income do not file tax returns. This year, however, needs to be different. In most cases, the rebate payments will range from \$300 to \$600 for individuals and \$600 to \$1200 for joint filers. Taxpayers may receive \$300 for each qualifying child.

According to the President's Economic Stimulus Bill, each individual who has at least \$3000 of "qualifying income" will receive a rebate check. What is considered "qualifying income"? The rebates are available to people who receive at least \$3000 in Title II Social Security benefits, including retirement, survivors and disability insurance benefits. This would include those receiving disabled adult child benefits, unless the individual is claimed as a dependent on another's tax return. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is not considered qualifying income for this rebate.

An individual must file a tax return if they want to receive the rebate check. The 2007 tax return must show at least \$3,000 in qualifying income. For example, a taxpayer who had \$500 in earned income and \$2,500 in any combination of the benefits described above can count those benefit payments toward his or her qualifying income to reach the \$3000 earned income requirement, even though the individual would not otherwise owe taxes on such income. Some recipients of the benefits may have filed a 2007 tax return and they do not need to do anything else. Those individuals will begin receiving their rebate payments in early May. Others may need to amend a previously filed tax return to include benefits to reach the \$3,000 qualifying income level. Adding those benefits on an amended return will not increase your tax liability, but will establish eligibility for the rebate. Also note that if an individual has misplaced their 1099 from Social Security, they are allowed to estimate their 2007 income.

The legislation also provides that tax rebates will not be considered income for purposes of determining eligibility for federal and federally-assisted state benefit programs, such as SSI. This will protect those SSI and Medicaid recipients who have at least \$3,000 in non-SSI income and who will qualify for the rebate.



Individuals who need to file a return this year to receive the rebate may be able to take advantage of thousands of free tax preparation sites nationwide for low-income and elderly taxpayers. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program provides help to low-and moderate income taxpayers. Call 1-800-906-9887 to locate the VITA site nearest you.

Protected Tomorrows Advocates are specially trained to handle the nuances involved with planning for people with special needs and can refer you to a site that will prepare tax returns for individuals with disabilities free-of charge.

Our goal at Protected Tomorrows is for families with special needs to live safe and fulfilling lives. The more money they have the more independent they could be. For more information on the tax rebate program or how to find a Protected Tomorrows Advocate, visit [www.ProtectedTomorrows.com](http://www.ProtectedTomorrows.com) or call 847/522-8086.