

## **ITI welcomes publication of Oireachtas Committee Report**

### ***“Firm proposals must be acted upon” – says Redmond***

*Wednesday, April 11 2007:* The Irish Taxation Institute (ITI) has welcomed the publication today (April 11, 2007) by the Oireachtas Committee on Finance and the Public Service of a Report on unclaimed tax reliefs and allowances.

The Report incorporates many of the recommendations made to the Oireachtas Committee by the ITI on January 17 when they met with the Committee.

Commenting on today's report, Mark Redmond, CEO, ITI said: “Great credit is due to the Committee for the proactive and professional approach they have taken. When ITI commissioned a survey of PAYE taxpayers last year, we had for the first time an assessment of the scale of this problem. Now for the first time we have a comprehensive list of recommendations from the Oireachtas which, if acted upon, can make a real difference for many thousands of people. The onus is on Government and the Revenue to act upon these recommendations and the ITI is prepared to play its part.”

ITI particularly welcomed recommendations to measure the scale of unclaimed tax reliefs, to simplify the language of tax, for consideration to be given to establishing a Taxpayer Advocate and to educating taxpayers more as to their entitlements.

Mark Redmond said: “ITI has advocated the need for a more customer focussed tax administration system. So long as cumbersome form filling and confusing language exists, unclaimed tax reliefs amounting to millions of euro will persist. Equally, the need to accurately establish the financial amount foregone by taxpayers is fundamental in crystallising attention to this issue. We now have firm cross Political Party consensus for action, consensus that the Government must act upon.”

Mr Redmond said a Taxpayer Advocate type figure, independent of Revenue should be established and that a new PAYE Customer Satisfaction Unit should be established within the Revenue Commissioner's Office. A key role of the PAYE Customer Satisfaction Unit would be to ensure a major simplification of the tax relief process following consultation with taxpayers through a process of customer panels.

**ENDS**

**Further info:**

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### Summary of ITI survey of PAYE taxpayers

- 1 in 2 PAYE taxpayers do not understand the tax system (1 million people)
- 50% of taxpayers are not claiming tax relief on medical expenses
- 55% of taxpayers are not claiming tax relief on bin charges
- 89% believe there should be an organisation to look after the ordinary taxpayer
- 88% are not afraid to engage with Revenue about tax
- 72% prefer human contact, not the Internet, to help answer their queries
- 37% of taxpayers do not understand tax certificates
- 700,000 PAYE taxpayers (35%) do not understand all the tax information on P60
- Two in five (42%) taxpayers leave their tax affairs to their employer yet a similar number (43%) are not sure if they are getting all their entitlements

### Note for Editors

Revenue estimates that there are 2 million PAYE taxpayers in Ireland.