



Written by [Kelly Holt](#) on March 31, 2014

The IRS Targeting of Catherine Engelbrecht

When the IRS began targeting conservatives and conservative groups that applied for tax-exempt status, it didn't count on people like Catherine Engelbrecht. In the summer of 2010, Engelbrecht made the request for tax-exempt status for the organization True the Vote, a non-profit election integrity organization, and King Street Patriots, which she describes as a "citizen-led liberty group."



After filing for tax-exempt status, Catherine and her husband, Bryan, found themselves targeted by a myriad of government agencies, including law enforcement, for what Engelbrecht would later conclude was simply having a difference of political opinion from that of the Obama administration. Ultimately, the couple and the organizations endured 15 different instances of audit or inquiry into their affairs.

King Street Patriots (KSP) and True the Vote share space in an upscale warehouse in Houston, Texas. KSP, a local Houston group, meets to discuss topics across the political spectrum, and was host to filmmaker Ami Horowitz in October 2012 when TNA interviewed Horowitz about his film that points out the flaws of the UN entitled *UN ME*. True the Vote has grown to a national organization with presence in all 50 states, training poll workers, providing research and education for citizens to launch informed citizen challenges about voter status, and providing a basis for advocacy of election reform.

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Almost immediately after her requests for tax-exempt status had been made, Catherine told TNA that the organizations began receiving visits from the FBI. The agency's Domestic Terrorism Unit informed her that they were watching one person who had attended one of KSP's public meetings. The visits continued, eventually totaling six different occasions.

Next, the Engelbrechts, owners of Engelbrecht Manufacturing, a manufacturer of oilfield component parts in Rosenberg, Texas, were subjected to an IRS audit of their business, followed by an audit of their personal tax returns.

Then other agencies began to show up at their business, including the BATF, and OSHA, who found no violations but their visits eventually resulted in fines upward of 20K. Engelbrecht said there was no real apparent reason for the inquiries and visits made by the agencies.

Meanwhile, the IRS continued its intrusive demands, including inquiries into every Facebook or Twitter posting Engelbrecht had ever made, her political aspirations, places she had spoken or intended to speak, the content of her remarks, and other abusive questions. It didn't take long before Engelbrecht decided that the statistical probability of her requests for tax-exempt status and the tyrannical actions of government agencies being unconnected was slim to none, and she decided to act.

After the second visit of the BATF, Engelbrecht called her attorney, asking, "Who do we sue, and how do we do it?" Lawsuits were filed against the IRS on several counts, including one to compel the agency to either grant the tax-exempt status, or refuse the request. In December 2013, the status was granted, but portions of the lawsuits have not yet been resolved.



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Engelbrecht told us that she has copies of a letter from Obama’s general counsel demanding investigation of any organization claiming to be involved with election integrity, and another specifically targeting True the Vote, designating it as a threat to the administration.

On February 6, 2014, she testified before the House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs, stating in [her testimony](#) about the IRS inquiries into her personal life that “these answers are not of interest to the typical IRS analyst, but they are certainly of interest to a political machine that would put its own survival against the civil liberties of a private citizen.”

Engelbrecht said the events have taken a great toll on her life, but she won’t stop. “We should all be very concerned about the implications of a federal government singling out and targeting individual citizens for a difference of opinion. It has only doubled my resolve to stand for principles and go beyond the rhetoric of being an American. I had to ask, What am I willing to put on the line?”

The Boston Massacre, marches of the Sons of Liberty, routings of the Tea Party, and the ride of Paul Revere all unfolded on King Street in Boston. King Street Patriots takes its name from the original group of Boston patriots who demonstrated in the streets in response to tyrannical British policies against the colonists. King Street was known as the hub of political activism. Catherine Engelbrecht demonstrated the spirit of a modern patriot when she told the House Subcommittee, “I will not ask permission to exercise my constitutional rights.”



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