

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-2802

July 11, 2007

Bret Ogilvie  
2530 Sunline Dr  
Reno, NV 89523-2084

Dear Bret:

Thank you for responding to my recent letter regarding the value of the U.S. dollar. I appreciate your continued interest in this issue.

To begin with, I apologize for the confusion my previous letter caused. To clarify, 31 U.S.C. 5116(b)(2) does in fact address the sale of silver and not the dollar. As you pointed out, 31 U.S.C. 5112(e) contains the most accurate definition of a dollar coin, which by statute must contain .999 ounce fine silver.

However, as we both know, paper dollars are used much more frequently in circulation, and the U.S. Code does not contain a specific definition of a dollar bill. According to 31 U.S.C. 5115(a)(2), the Treasury is authorized to print currency notes of "at least one dollar." No law mandates use of the dollar bill, but clearly it has been a more convenient mode of legal tender for Americans in recent decades. As you are likely aware, the Coinage Act of 1965, which modified 31 U.S.C. 5103, states: "United States coins and currency (including federal reserve notes) are legal tender for all debts, public charges, taxes, and dues." Whether individuals utilize coins or paper currency is a matter of personal choice. Similarly, no federal statute mandates that a private business, a person or an organization must accept currency or coins as for payment for goods or services. Private businesses are free to develop their own policies on whether or not to accept cash unless state law says otherwise.

Again, thank you for staying in touch with me. Please continue keeping me informed of the issues that matter to you.

Sincerely,



DEAN HELLER  
Member of Congress

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