

## Jorge Castro Quoted on Possible Role of IRS in Sanctioning Russia in Politico

### "What's the IRS Have to Do with Russia and Ukraine?"

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Jorge Castro, former Counselor to the IRS Commissioner during the Obama Administration and Democratic Congressional tax aide, discussed how investigative tools of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and other federal agencies might be effective in applying sanctions on Russia – in an effort to stop its war on Ukraine – by tracking Russian assets, including those of President Putin and his allies. The IRS's Criminal Investigations division frequently teams up with the U.S. Department of Justice to track and trace any number of avenues that people use to conceal their assets – be it through cryptocurrencies, shell companies or other means. According to Castro, "Anytime there's a lot of government scrutiny, there's a lot of interagency cooperation and exchange of information and knowledge." Congress has given IRS criminal investigators new tools, including Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), which has allowed the IRS to more closely police the activities of American taxpayers who have stashed assets overseas because of increased information sharing with foreign governments and financial institutions. That could give a little extra leg up as the federal government seeks to ratchet up the pressure on President Putin and his associates. "It's definitely been a game changer," Castro said.