



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Cincinnati Field Office *Special Agent in Charge Kathy A. Enstrom*

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MANAGER OF CHECK-CASHING STORE SENTENCED FOR PARTICIPATING IN TAX REFUND SCAM

CINCINNATI – Marnay Love, 34, of Cincinnati was ordered to pay \$84,090 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), \$17,350 in restitution to ACE Cash Express and serve eight months in prison followed by three years of supervised release for conspiring to defraud the IRS by filing false claims for federal income tax refunds. Love pleaded guilty to this offense in March 2013.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio and Kathy A. Enstrom, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, Cincinnati Field Office, announced the sentence handed down by Chief U.S. District Judge Sandra S. Beckwith.

According to court documents, between January 2011 and September 2012 Love conspired with others in a scheme to obtain false claims for income tax refunds from the IRS by electronically filing false 2010 and 2011 federal income tax returns. Specifically, Love assisted in the cashing of at least 43 U.S. Treasury income tax refund checks worth \$84,090.

Love helped Latasha Hampton cash the income tax refund checks. The false claims for income tax refunds were submitted to the IRS by Ellis Scott, Bridgette Jones, and Dione Howard. Love worked as a manager at ACE Cash Express, a check-cashing establishment in Cincinnati, Ohio, which is where the income tax refund checks were cashed. Love sometimes cashed the income tax refund checks under account names that did not match the individual on the check. Once cashed, Love took a portion of the income tax refund check as a fee and gave the remaining money to Latasha Hampton.

Love admitted that none of the payees on the income tax refund checks ever came into ACE Cash Express with Latasha Hampton to have the checks cashed. Love further admitted to knowing that the income tax refund checks were the result of an income tax refund scheme, but did not know that the false claims filed for income tax refunds were submitted using the stolen identities of the elderly and disabled.

In addition, Love admitted to giving an individual \$17,500 from ACE Cash Express after this individual entered the store and demanded cash from her.

In April 2013, Ellis Scott, 32, of Cincinnati pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to submit false claims for federal income tax refunds with the IRS and two counts of aggravated identity theft. Scott is scheduled to be sentenced on December 2, 2013.

On September 10, 2013 Dione Howard, 33, of Cincinnati was sentenced to twelve months and one day in prison, three years of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$30,129 in restitution to the IRS for conspiring to submit false claims for federal income tax refunds with the IRS and for the unlawful use of a means of identification.

On September 16, 2013 Bridgette Jones, 34, of Cincinnati was sentenced to 61 months in prison, three years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay \$477,490 in restitution to the IRS for conspiring to submit false claims for federal income tax refunds with the IRS and for committing aggravated identity theft.

On October 16, 2013, Latasha Hampton, 34, of Cincinnati was sentenced to ten months in prison, three years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay \$84,090 in restitution to the IRS for conspiring to submit false claims for federal income tax refunds with the IRS and for forging endorsements on U.S. Treasury checks.

Kathy A. Enstrom, Special Agent in Charge, IRS Criminal Investigation, Cincinnati Field Office stated, "The object of this refund fraud scheme was to swindle the government and the taxpaying public. In this case IRS Criminal Investigation identified, investigated and together, with our partners at the U.S. Attorney's Office, vigorously prosecuted those who were involved in filing false claims for refunds."

These cases are being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jessica W. Knight and were investigated by special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation.

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