



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

Date: Oct. 1, 2015

Contact: *CI-HQ-COMMUNICATIONSEDUCATION@ci.irs.gov
IRS – Criminal Investigation

CI Release #: CI-2015-10-06-B

Louisiana Resident Sentenced for Involvement in Stolen Identity Tax Fraud Scheme

A resident of Hammond, Louisiana, was sentenced to prison for his involvement in a stolen identity tax fraud scheme, Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciralo of the Justice Department's Tax Division and U.S. Attorney Kenneth A. Polite of the Eastern District of Louisiana announced today.

Thaddeus Richardson, 49, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Jay C. Zainey of the Eastern District of Louisiana to serve 51 months in prison to be followed by three years of supervised release. Richardson pleaded guilty on July 2 to seven counts of theft of public money, one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, and one count of a dual-object conspiracy to defraud the United States and to commit mail fraud and theft of public money. Judge Zainey will determine the amount in restitution Richardson has to pay to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at a later date.

According to court documents, Richardson and his co-defendants conspired to prepare and file false income tax returns using stolen identities, including the victims' names and social security numbers, to claim large tax refunds. The refund checks were mailed to addresses in Louisiana, including post office boxes that were opened by the co-conspirators. Once they received the checks, Richardson and his co-defendants falsely endorsed and deposited the refund checks into bank accounts under their control. The co-conspirators then divided the proceeds of the refund checks amongst themselves.

The indictment also charged Cedrick Mitchell, aka Skeet, 40; Corey Lewis, 37; and others with conspiracy to defraud the United States, conspiracy to commit money laundering, conspiracy to commit mail fraud and conspiracy to commit theft of public money. Lewis was also charged with three counts of theft of public money and three counts of aggravated identity theft. On Sept. 15, Mitchell was sentenced to serve 33 months in prison. On Sept. 29, Lewis was sentenced to serve 75 months in prison. All of the remaining defendants in this case have pleaded guilty to various charges and are awaiting sentencing.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciralo and U.S. Attorney Polite commended special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, who investigated the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Hayden Brockett and Dall Kammer of the Eastern District of Louisiana and Trial Attorney Lauren Castaldi of the Tax Division, who are prosecuting the case.

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