



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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Louisiana Residents Sentenced for Involvement in Stolen Identity Tax Fraud Scheme

Two residents of Hammond, Louisiana, were sentenced for their involvement in a stolen identity tax fraud scheme, Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciruolo of the Justice Department's Tax Division and U.S. Attorney Kenneth A. Polite of the Eastern District of Louisiana announced today.

Angela Chaney, 43, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Jay C. Zainey of the Eastern District of Louisiana to serve 36 months in prison to be followed by three years of supervised release. Craig Lewis, 40, was sentenced by Judge Zainey to serve three years of probation. Chaney and Lewis each pleaded guilty to one count of a multi-object conspiracy to defraud the United States and to commit theft of public money and mail fraud on July 2 and June 23, respectively. Chaney additionally pleaded guilty to one count of aggravated identity theft. Their restitution to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will be determined at a later date.

According to court documents, Chaney, Lewis and their 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 the checks were received, Chaney, Lewis and their co-conspirators brought checks to others who 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; Thaddeus Richardson, 49; 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. Corey Lewis was also charged with three counts of theft of public money and three counts of aggravated identity theft. Mitchell was sentenced to serve 33 months in prison on Sept. 15, Corey Lewis was sentenced to serve 75 months in prison on Sept. 29 and Richardson was sentenced to serve 51 months in prison on Oct. 6. All of the remaining defendants in this case have pleaded guilty to various charges and are awaiting sentencing.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciruolo 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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