



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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Louisiana Man Sentenced for Involvement in Stolen Identity Tax Fraud Scheme

A resident of Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana, was sentenced to serve 15 months in prison to be followed by three years of supervised release for his involvement in a stolen identity refund fraud (SIRF) 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.

Brad Lewis, aka Bird, 33, pleaded guilty on May 26 to one count of a multi-object conspiracy to defraud the United States and to commit mail fraud and theft of public money. U.S. District Judge Jay C. Zainey of the Eastern District of Louisiana imposed today's sentence and also ordered Lewis to pay \$1,136,966.94 in restitution owed to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

According to court documents, Lewis 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 Lewis opened. Once the checks were received, Lewis 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; Craig Lewis, 40; Angela Chaney, 43; Thaddeus Richardson, 49; and Martin Jackson Sr., 49, with conspiracy to defraud the United States, conspiracy to commit money laundering, conspiracy to commit mail fraud, conspiracy to commit theft of public money and other charges. On Sept. 15, Cedrick Mitchell was sentenced to 33 months in prison. On Sept. 29, Corey Lewis was sentenced to 75 months in prison. On Oct. 6, Thaddeus Richardson was sentenced to 51 months in prison. On Oct. 13, Angela Chaney was sentenced to 36 months in prison and Craig Lewis was sentenced to three years of probation. On Oct. 20, Martin Jackson Sr. was sentenced to 12 months and one day in prison.

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 M. Castaldi of the Tax Division, who are prosecuting the case.

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