



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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Former Georgia Accountant Pleads Guilty to Filing a False Tax Return

A former certified public accountant in Georgia pleaded guilty today to one count of filing a false tax return, Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciralo of the Justice Department's Tax Division and U.S. Attorney John A. Horn of the Northern District of Georgia announced.

According to court documents and information presented in court, Thomas D. Ziff was a licensed certified public accountant in Georgia, and from approximately January 2006 through December 2010, Ziff operated a tax return preparation and accounting business. During that time, Ziff was the trustee of a trust that was associated with the last will and testament of another individual. As the trustee, Ziff opened a bank account in the name of the trust at Wachovia Bank over which he had sole signatory authority; he then proceeded to embezzle and cause to be transferred approximately \$300,000 from the trust bank account to other bank accounts that he controlled and then used the funds for his personal use. Ziff failed to report the embezzled funds as income on his federal income tax returns for the years 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Ziff faces a statutory maximum sentence of three years in prison, one year of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine. As part of his plea agreement, Ziff also agreed to pay restitution to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). U.S. District Judge Steve C. Jones of the Northern District of Georgia set sentencing for April 11, 2016.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciralo and U.S. Attorney Horn commended special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation, who investigated the case, and Trial Attorney Christopher J. Maietta of the Tax Division and Assistant U.S. Attorney Steven D. Grimberg of the Northern District of Georgia, who prosecuted the case.

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