



# PRESS RELEASE

## Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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### **California Tax Return Preparer Pleads Guilty to Preparing False Tax Returns**

*Caused Loss of More Than \$1.2 Million*

An El Cajon, California tax return preparer pleaded guilty today in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, to three counts of aiding and assisting in the preparation of a false tax return, announced Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciralo, head of the Justice Department's Tax Division, and U.S. Attorney Laura Duffy for the Southern District of California.

According to documents filed with the court, Marla Cunningham, 50, of San Diego, California, owned and operated Cunningham's Tax Service, a tax preparation business in El Cajon, California. Cunningham admitted that she prepared false individual income tax returns for her clients for tax years 2008 through 2010 that included false charitable deductions, unreimbursed employee expenses, education credits, medical and dental expenses and business expenses. Cunningham agreed that she caused a loss of more than \$1.2 million.

Cunningham faces a statutory maximum sentence of three years in prison for each count of aiding and assisting in the preparation of a false return, a period of supervised release, restitution and monetary penalties at her sentencing scheduled for March 10, 2017.

Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Ciralo and U.S. Attorney Duffy thanked special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation, who conducted the investigation, and Trial Attorneys Matthew Hoffman and Benjamin Weir of the Tax Division, who are prosecuting the case.

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