

PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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California Man Sentenced to Prison for Filing Tax Returns in the Name of Deceased Individuals and Stealing Social Security and Refund Checks

Used California Death Records to Seek Tax Refunds

A Hugh Robinson, a San Pablo, California resident, was sentenced yesterday to serve 144 months in prison for filing tax returns using the identities of deceased individuals and stealing social security and refund checks destined for other individuals, announced Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Stuart M. Goldberg of the Justice Department's Tax Division and U.S. Attorney Brian J. Stretch for the Northern District of California.

In October 2016, Robinson, 46, was convicted of conspiring to steal public money, stealing public money, and aggravated identity theft. According to the evidence presented at his trial, from at least August 2013 through April 2015, Robinson and his co-conspirators took names and personal identification information of deceased individuals from California death records and used them to file income tax returns seeking refunds. Robinson and his co-conspirators directed the refunds to addresses and bank accounts that they controlled. Robinson also bought and cashed legitimate refund and social security benefits checks that he knew had been stolen. Robinson and his co-conspirators obtained fraudulent California IDs and used them to cash the refund and social security checks at various stores, including in the Richmond-area. total, Robinson intended to cause a loss of more than \$1.5 million.

In addition to the term of prison imposed, Robinson was ordered to serve three years of supervised release and to pay restitution in the amount of \$900,402 to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Goldberg and U.S. Attorney Stretch commended special agents of IRS–Criminal Investigation who conducted the investigation, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Thomas Newman and Jose A. Olivera, and Trial Attorney Gregory Bernstein of the Tax Division, who prosecuted the case.

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