



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

Date: March 27, 2017

Contact: *CI-HQ-COMMUNICATIONSEDCATION@ci.irs.gov
IRS – Criminal Investigation

CI Release #: CI-2017-03-27-A

North Carolina Return Preparers Indicted for False Tax Returns *Falsely Claimed Earned Income Tax Credits to Increase Clients' Refunds*

A federal grand jury sitting in Greensboro, North Carolina returned an indictment yesterday charging two Durham tax return preparers with conspiring to defraud the United States and preparing false tax returns, announced Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Stuart M. Goldberg of the Justice Department's Tax Division and Acting U.S. Attorney Sandra J. Hairston for the Middle District of North Carolina.

According to the indictment, Keesha Frye owned and operated KEF Professional Tax Services, a Durham tax preparation business, where Maria Streater also worked as a return preparer. From 2012 through 2014, Frye and Streater allegedly falsified their clients' tax returns by including fake and inflated sources of income to qualify for and maximize the earned income tax credit, and thereby increase the refunds claimed on the returns. Frye and Streater also allegedly filed false personal tax returns. Streater did not report the income she earned from KEF and Frye claimed false child care expenses.

An indictment merely alleges that crimes have been committed. The defendant are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

If convicted, Frye and Streater face a statutory maximum sentence of five years in prison for conspiracy and three years for each count of preparing false tax returns. They also face a term of supervised release, restitution and monetary penalties.

Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Goldberg and Acting U.S. Attorney Hairston commended special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation, who conducted the investigation, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Anand Ramaswamy and Trial Attorney Nathan Brooks of the Tax Division, who are prosecuting this case.

###