



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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Benin Man Convicted in Pennsylvania of Using Stolen IDs to File Tax Returns Seeking More Than \$800,000 in Refunds

Used Prepaid Debit Cards and Western Union to Send Fraudulent Refunds to Nigeria

A Republic of Benin man unlawfully residing in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was convicted today in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania of conspiring to commit access device fraud, announced Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Stuart M. Goldberg of the Justice Department's Tax Division and Acting U.S. Attorney Louis D. Lappen for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

According to the indictment and evidence at trial, from February through June 2014, Abdou Koudos Adissa was engaged in a conspiracy in which stolen identities were used to file tax returns claiming refunds with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Co-conspirators filed tax returns fraudulently seeking more than \$800,000 in refunds, which were loaded onto Green Dot prepaid debit cards and sent via Western Union to Nigeria. In order for the prepaid debit cards to accept direct deposits, they had to be registered using personal identifying information including names, social security numbers and addresses. During a search of the apartment Adissa shared with a co-conspirator, special agents found 106 Green Dot cards in Adissa's room. Adissa registered the Green Dot cards using stolen IDs and provided his co-conspirators with the direct deposit information related to the cards so that fraudulently obtained refunds could be directed to them. to the evidence produced at trial, he called Western Union 63 times in three months to facilitate transferring these fraudulent refunds to Nigeria.

Sentencing is scheduled for June 28. Adissa faces a statutory maximum sentence of five years in prison, a period of supervised release, restitution and monetary penalties. Adissa is pending immigration removal proceedings.

Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Goldberg and Acting U.S. Attorney Lappen commended special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, who conducted the

investigation, and Assistant U.S. Attorney David J. Ignall and Trial Attorney Carl F. Brooker of the Tax Division who prosecuted the case.

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