



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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North Carolina Return Preparer Pleads Guilty to Filing False Income Tax Returns

Caused Loss of \$600,737 by Claiming Fraudulent Earned Income Tax Credit for Clients

A Durham, North Carolina return preparer pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina to filing 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 documents filed with the court, from 2012 through 2014, Laurean S. Robinson, 31, worked as the office manager and a return preparer at Tax Breaks, a tax preparation business in Durham. Robinson admitted that she prepared returns for her clients that fraudulently claimed the earned income tax credit and sought inflated refunds. To qualify her clients for the earned income tax credit, Robinson falsely reported that they earned income providing household services, such as babysitting and caretaking. Robinson trained other Tax Breaks employees to prepare false returns in a similar fashion. In addition to fees charged by Tax Breaks, Robinson also often required her clients to pay her an additional fee in cash. Robinson's criminal conduct caused a tax loss to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) of approximately \$600,737.

Sentencing is scheduled for Aug. 15. Robinson faces a statutory maximum sentence of three years in prison, a period 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 JoAnna McFadden and Trial Attorney Daniel McGraw of the Tax Division, who are prosecuting the case.

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