



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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Virginia Couple Indicted for Tax Crimes and Structuring More Than \$400,000

Allegedly Used Purported Religious Missions to Hide Income

A grand jury in the Western District of Virginia indicted a Concord, Virginia couple for filing false federal tax returns and conspiring to structure currency transactions, announced Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Stuart M. Goldberg of the Justice Department's Tax Division and Acting U.S. Attorney Rick A. Mountcastle for the Western District of Virginia. The husband, Barry Edwards was also charged with tax evasion and corruptly endeavoring to impede the internal revenue laws.

The indictment, which was unsealed today following arrest and arraignment, alleges that Barry Edwards, 53, and his wife, Joanne Edwards, 49, created two purported religious missions in 2006, which they used as nominees to receive income Barry Edwards earned selling nutritional supplements. indictment further alleges that Barry and Joanne Edwards deposited this income into bank accounts they held in the nominee names. It is alleged that the couple withdrew more than \$400,000 in cash from the nominee accounts, in increments less than \$10,000, to evade bank-reporting requirements. y allegedly then deposited the funds into their personal bank accounts to pay personal expenses including car payments and their children's tuition. Barry Edwards also allegedly used the funds to purchase a five-acre farm in Concord, Virginia. According to the indictment, they did not report this income on their 2013 or 2014 tax returns.

The indictment further alleges that Barry Edwards corruptly endeavored to impede the internal revenue laws by establishing nominee entities, directing that his income be paid to them and filing false tax returns for 2013 through 2015 that omitted this income.

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

If convicted, Barry and Joanne Edwards each face a maximum statutory sentence of five years in prison for the conspiracy charge, and a maximum statutory sentence of three years in prison for each count of filing a false tax return. Barry Edwards also faces a maximum statutory sentence of five years in prison for each tax evasion count and a maximum statutory sentence of three years in prison for corruptly endeavoring to impede the internal revenue laws. They also face a term of supervised release, restitution and monetary penalties.

Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Goldberg and Acting U.S. Attorney Mountcastle thanked special agents of Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, who conducted the investigation, and Trial Attorney Sean Beaty of the Tax Division and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Kari Munro, who are prosecuting the case.

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