



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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

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California Return Preparer Sentenced to Prison for Filing Fraudulent Tax Returns

Caused Loss of More Than \$1.2 Million

A San Diego, California tax return preparer was sentenced to 37 months in prison today for preparing fraudulent tax returns, announced Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Stuart M. Goldberg of the Justice Department's Tax Division.

According to documents filed with the court, Marla Lynn Cunningham owned and operated Cunningham's Tax Service, a tax preparation business located in El Cajon, California. From 2010 through 2012, Cunningham prepared fraudulent returns for her clients that reported fake business losses, charitable contributions, and medical, dental, education and unreimbursed employee expenses. Cunningham caused a tax loss of approximately \$1,237,943.

In addition to the term of prison imposed, Cunningham was ordered to serve one year of supervised release and will be ordered to pay \$91,867 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Cunningham pleaded guilty in December 2016 to three counts of preparing false tax returns.

Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Goldberg commended special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation, who conducted the investigation, and Trial Attorneys Matthew R. Hoffman and Benjamin J. Weir of the Tax Division, who are prosecuting the case. Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General Goldberg also thanked the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Southern District of California for their substantial assistance.

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