



# PRESS RELEASE

## Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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### **Texas Man Pleads Guilty to Theft of Public Money for Role in Stolen Identity Refund Fraud Scheme Involving IRS “Get Transcript” Database**

A Houston, Texas, man pleaded guilty today in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas in Houston to one count of theft of public money, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciralo of the Justice Department’s Tax Division and U.S. Attorney Kenneth Magidson of the Southern District of Texas.

An indictment returned on Nov. 10, 2015, charged Denzel Roberts, 24, with participating in a scheme that used stolen personal identification information to file false federal income tax returns for tax year 2014. The indictment alleged that participants in the scheme obtained means of identification of actual individuals, including their names and social security numbers, and used this information to access the Internal Revenue Service’s (IRS) “Get Transcript” database. Using the stolen identities and information obtained from the Get Transcript database, other members of the scheme prepared and filed false tax returns fraudulently requesting refunds. According to the plea agreement, Roberts used a fraudulent passport to open several bank accounts into which the refunds were deposited. Roberts withdrew the illicit proceeds, retaining a portion of the money as a fee and providing the remainder of the funds to others.

Roberts faces a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000. As part of his plea agreement, Roberts agreed to pay restitution to the IRS in the amount of \$74,341.39. U.S. District Judge Lynn Hughes of the Southern District of Texas set sentencing for Aug. 8.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciralo and U.S. Attorney Magidson thanked special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation and the FBI Houston Area Cyber Crime Task Force, who investigated the case and Trial Attorneys Michael Boteler and Grace Albinson of the Tax Division, who are prosecuting this case with assistance from Assistant U.S. Attorney Jimmy Sledge of the Southern District of Texas.

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