



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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North Carolina Man Sentenced in Tax Refund Fraud Scheme

A Raleigh, North Carolina, man was sentenced to 71 months in prison today after pleading guilty in February to one count of conspiracy to commit theft of public money and one count of theft of public money, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciralo of the Justice Department's Tax Division.

Wilfredo Acosta Hidalgo, 47, in 2011 and 2012, conspired with check cashers to cash U.S. Treasury refund checks issued as a result of fraudulently-filed tax returns, according to court documents. Hidalgo provided the check cashers with U.S. Treasury checks issued to third parties in whose name the fraudulent returns were filed. The check cashers deposited the U.S. Treasury checks into their business bank accounts and provided Hidalgo with cash equal to the value of the U.S. Treasury checks, less a check-cashing fee. The third-party payees were not present when the checks were cashed.

In addition to the prison term, Hidalgo was ordered to serve three years of supervised release and pay \$4,280,871 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciralo commended special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation, who investigated the case, and Trial Attorneys Lauren Castaldi and Nathan Brooks of the Tax Division, who prosecuted this case.

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