

PRESS RELEASE

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FORMER OWNER OF CASBAH RESTAURANT PLEADS GUILTY TO TAX EVASION

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Sabi Atteyih, 44, Madison, pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court in Madison to income tax evasion. Atteyih pleaded guilty to a one-count information charging him with evading his income taxes for 2002.

At the plea hearing, the government presented its factual basis for the plea, which included the fact that Atteyih reported zero taxable income to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and paid zero income taxes for the years 2002 through 2005. During that time frame, Atteyih owned and operated the Casbah Restaurant in Madison.

According to the government, IRS agents analyzed Atteyih's business and personal bank records and determined that he had underreported his income. According to the bank deposits analysis, Atteyih underreported his taxable income by \$349,672 from 2002 through 2005, resulting in \$128,938 in federal tax evaded. During that same time period, IRS agents also determined that Atteyih had taken draws from

the business in excess of \$461,000.

The government also presented evidence showing that Atteyih had successfully completed three accounting courses at UW-Madison and one accounting course at MATC. The government also presented evidence that while Atteyih claimed no taxable income to the IRS in the years 2002 through 2005, he reported positive earnings from the Casbah to various financial entities including Anchor Bank, American Express, Honda Credit Corp., and Bank of America.

Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb scheduled sentencing for February 27, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. Atteyih faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The charges against Atteyih were the result of an investigation conducted by Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Division. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Dan Graber.

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