



Department of Justice

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Northern District of Georgia

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ANOTHER FORMER HOME DEPOT EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO VENDOR KICKBACK SCHEME AND TAX EVASION

Atlanta, GA--JAMES P. ROBINSON, 43, of Atlanta, Georgia, has pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and two counts of tax evasion, arising out of a scheme to defraud Home Depot.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "This defendant has now admitted to taking secret payoffs from Home Depot's foreign suppliers and not reporting or paying taxes on that corrupt income. Vendor kickbacks to corporate employees corrupt the honest operations of American businesses, and those who pay, receive, or solicit such payoffs may face federal prosecution."

"Today's plea underscores the importance of holding accountable those who participate in kickback schemes that subvert the competitive process by placing their own interests above those of the companies that employ them," said Thomas O. Barnett, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Department's Antitrust Division in Washington, D.C.

IRS Criminal Investigation Special Agent In Charge Reginael D. McDaniel said, "The prosecution of individuals who intentionally conceal their income, even if obtained from illegal activity, is a vital element in maintaining public confidence in our tax system. We should not expect the honest taxpayer to foot the bill for those who choose to hide their income from the IRS."

According to United States Attorney Nahmias and information presented in court: ROBINSON, a former Divisional Merchandising Manager for Flooring, participated in a conspiracy to defraud Home Depot by taking kickbacks from foreign suppliers seeking to do business with Home Depot. ROBINSON arranged for Home Depot to purchase items for resale on less than the most advantageous terms to the company. Another former Home Depot employee, ANTHONY TESVICH, who pleaded guilty last month to similar offenses for his participation in this scheme to defraud Home Depot, received millions of dollars in bribes from foreign suppliers and passed on to ROBINSON through kickbacks

hundreds of thousands of dollars and other items of value, including a luxury SUV. Home Depot fired ROBINSON in July 2007.

ROBINSON also pleaded guilty to evading federal taxes on his corrupt income for tax years 2005 (\$133,000 in unreported income); and 2006 (\$632,879 in unreported income).

Sentencing for ROBINSON has been set for October 14, 2008, at 10:30 a.m. before United States District Judge Richard W. Story.

Anyone with information on such corporate kickbacks and fraud is asked to call the FBI at 404-679-9000.

This case is being investigated by the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Home Depot has cooperated in the federal investigation.

This case is being prosecuted by John R. Fitzpatrick, Trial Attorney for the United States Department of Justice Antitrust Division, Atlanta Field Office, Assistant United States Attorney Russell Phillips, and Assistant United States Attorney Sally Molloy.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan