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DALLAS, TEXAS
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**Former Deputy U.S. Marshal
Sentenced to 24 Months in Federal Prison**

United States Attorney Jane J. Boyle announced that Richard L. "Trigger" Jones, of Abilene, Texas, was sentenced this afternoon by the Honorable David C. Godbey, United States District Judge, to 24 months imprisonment, ordered to pay a \$100,000 fine, and ordered to pay \$22,406 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service. Jones, age 49, pled guilty in January to a two-count information that charged one count of tax evasion and one count of conspiracy to violate the immigration laws. As part of the plea agreement with the government, Jones, who was the Deputy United States Marshal assigned to the Abilene office, was required to resign his position with the U.S. Marshals Service. Judge Godbey ordered that Jones surrender to the Bureau of Prisons on July 12, 2004.

U.S. Attorney Boyle stated, "There is no place among the dedicated professionals of the United States Marshals Service for anyone who so brazenly defies federal law. Thanks to the Department of Justice - Office of Inspector General, the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General, and the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation, his days in law enforcement are over and Jones has been brought to justice. I also applaud the full cooperation by United States Marshal Randy Ely in this investigation."

Jones admitted that he filed false federal income tax returns for 1997 through 2002 and evaded a substantial portion of his income tax for those years. He understated his taxable income by claiming deductions to which he was not entitled and failing to report income. He claimed nondeductible personal expenses, fictitious expenses, and duplicate expenses as deductions and fabricated a goat ranching business by concocting income and expenses that the bogus business generated. In addition he failed to report income from two businesses and from miscellaneous sources, including an oil field pump business. In total, for 1997 through 2002, Jones owes \$50,342.00 in additional taxes.

Additionally, Jones wrote numerous checks to fictitious persons and deducted them as business expenses and wrote checks to real persons who had no knowledge of the checks. He falsely endorsed the checks and used his official position to cash the checks, then claiming them as business expenses. Jones hired the aliens to construct portions of his home and guesthouse.

Some of the intentional false deductions Jones admitted he claimed are:

- deducting a hot tub as a medical expense, yet receiving the hot tub for free and writing a \$7,400 check to a friend who cashed it and returned the money;
- deducting a \$1,119.09 home entertainment set as truck radios;
- deducting \$8,600 for the purchase of a trailer when a friend cashed the check and gave Jones back the money;
- deducting 22 expenses twice in the last three tax years;
- deducting the construction costs of a guesthouse as office construction expense; and
- deducting deer hunting expenses as goat farming expenses, yet he had no goat business and only fabricated goat sales to give the appearance of a goat business.

Jones also admitted that since October 1996, he and others conspired to transport and move aliens within the United States, knowing, or in reckless disregard of the fact that the alien was in the country illegally. He and others also conspired to conceal, harbor, and shield from detection illegal aliens, even using his home to prevent them from being arrested and returning to Mexico.

Using his position as a Deputy U.S. Marshal, Jones obtained Immigration and Naturalization “parole” documents for several aliens whom he had encouraged or induced to remain in the U.S. on the false premises that they would be “law enforcement confidential informants.” After obtaining the parole documents, he and others made the aliens provide manual labor at various places in and near Abilene. He admitted that he transported and moved the illegal aliens in and around Taylor County, Texas, and elsewhere, to provide labor and services in his property and property owned by others.

U.S. Attorney Boyle praised the investigative efforts of the Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General; the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General; and the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Michael J. Uhl in the Dallas, Texas, U.S. Attorney’s Office.

