



U.S. Department of Justice

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 7, 2004

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that a federal grand jury has charged Juan Nelson Laines, 35, of McLean, Virginia, with 18 counts of aiding in the preparation of false income tax returns. The indictment was returned in federal court in Alexandria, Virginia, on April 6, 2004.

According to the indictment, Laines was the owner and operator of an Arlington-based tax return preparation business known as Latino Tax Service. The indictment alleges that from on or before April 15, 2000, until at least April 15, 2002, Laines prepared and provided tax returns for many of his clients that claimed understated business income, overstated and fictitious deductions, and unentitled credits, thereby reducing his clients' tax liability or causing his clients to receive a larger tax refund than the refund to which they were entitled by law. The indictment also alleges that the defendant prepared more than 900 such returns during the 1999, 2000 and 2001 filing years resulting in a tax loss that exceeds \$1,000,000. If convicted, Laines faces a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment on each count, and a maximum fine of \$100,000 per count.

"Tax cheats break the law, and place a heavy burden on honest tax payers. We will aggressively prosecute those who fail to fulfill their obligation to the Internal Revenue Service," Mr. McNulty said.

This case was investigated by Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation special agents and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Michael J. Elston and Andrew Lelling of the U.S. Attorney's Cybercrime Unit and Jeffrey A. Neiman of the Tax Division, U.S. Department of Justice.

An indictment is merely an allegation. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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