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TAX PREPARER PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY
TO DEFRAUD THE UNITED STATES

BALTIMORE, Maryland - United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein announces that today Francis I. Ukadike, 49, of Baltimore, Maryland, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to defraud the United States.

In a statement of facts provided to the court as part of the plea agreement, Ukadike admitted that between 1999 and 2002, he owned and managed Ukadike & Associates, CPA, an accounting and tax return preparation business located in Baltimore, Maryland. During this period, he employed Obehi Okoniha. With the assistance of Ms. Okoniha, Ukadike was responsible for filing at least thirty-two false tax returns for the years 1999, 2000 and 2001 which falsely claimed refunds in the amount of $42,631. Twenty-eight returns were false in that they improperly claimed head of household filing status for individuals that Ukadike knew to be married, which enabled these individuals to qualify and falsely claim the earned income tax credit (EITC). Four returns were false in that they claimed false schedule C losses in order to maximize the amount of claimed EITC. Ukadike knew those losses to be false.

Ukadike faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison, a fine of $250,000 and a year of supervised release. United States District Judge Andre M. Davis has scheduled sentencing for January 13, 2006.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the investigative work performed by the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation. Mr. Rosenstein also thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul M. Tiao, who prosecuted the case.