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**MORE INDIVIDUALS ASSOCIATED WITH TAX REFUND SCHEME INDICTED**

FRESNO--United States Attorney John K. Vincent and IRS Criminal Investigation Special Agent in Charge Victor Song announced today that JUAN SANCHEZ, 38, and his wife, IRMA AMARILLAS, 34, of Porterville, and ADELA JIMENEZ, 38, and her husband, JOSE JIMENEZ, 38, of Porterville, were indicted yesterday by a federal grand jury in Fresno on conspiracy to defraud the United States by submitting false tax returns.

In a separate indictment, MIGUEL MACIEL, 24, of Terra Bella, ANDRES MACIEL, 44, and his wife, NORA MACIEL, 39, of Ducor, RAFAEL TORRES RAMOS, 40, and his wife, LOURDES MACIEL RAMOS, 38, of Terra Bella, MARIANO MACIEL RAMOS, 35, of Ducor, and RAFAEL MACIEL TORRES, 34, of Porterville, were also indicted by the federal grand jury in Fresno on conspiracy to defraud the United States by submitting false tax returns. Both cases are part of the government's ongoing crackdown on illegal tax refund schemes operating in the Central Valley.

According to the indictments, the defendants were involved in two separate tax refund schemes using false Forms W-2 that listed employers who did not employ the alleged wage earner, and stated wages and withholding that would make the taxpayer eligible for a tax refund. The defendants filed the tax returns by mail and used their residence addresses and post office boxes to receive the fraudulent refund checks. Once the tax refund checks arrived at various post office boxes and residences, the signature of the alleged payee or the signature of the defendant was affixed to the back of each check as an endorsement. Defendants allegedly would then cash the checks at various check cashing locations in the Central Valley.

According to Special Agent in Charge Victor Song, "These indictments provide more evidence that the IRS is aggressively working to detect and to dismantle tax fraud schemes."

The defendants face up to 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 each if convicted.

The charges are only allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

The Sanchez case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Sheila K.

Oberto, and the Maciel case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Sheila K. Oberto and E. Robert Wright. Both cases were investigated by the Criminal Investigation Division of the Internal Revenue Service.

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