



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
District of Maryland
Northern Division*

*Thomas M. DiBiagio
United States Attorney*

*Vickie E. LeDuc
Public Information Officer*

*6625 United States Courthouse
101 West Lombard Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2692*

*410-209-4800
TTY/TDD: 410-962-4462
410-209-4885
FAX 410-962-3091
Vickie.LeDuc@usdoj.gov*

**May 6, 2003
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION CONTACT
Vickie E. LeDuc, AUSA
(410) 209-4885**

LAUREL WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FILING FALSE TAX RETURN

Baltimore, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced today that Evelina C. Hodge, age 41, of Laurel, Maryland pled guilty to one count of filing a false claim with the United States. Her guilty plea arises out of the February indictment which charges Hodge with submitting false tax returns in her own name and in the names of friends and family in order to attempt to obtain tax refunds totaling approximately \$85,000.

According to the statement of facts presented to the court, Hodge filed approximately 25 income tax returns during 1998 and 1999 in the names of friends and family which contained false and fraudulent information. The false information typically involved fictitious employers, inflated withholding figures and false wage information. Hodge also filed false personal returns for herself which intentionally overstated her income, withholding and deductions. The IRS paid approximately \$59,000 of the \$85,000 Hodge attempted to receive in fraudulent tax refunds.

The statement of facts also indicated that Hodge was previously convicted in Maryland for engaging in the same conduct for earlier tax years. Hodge was on probation for filing false state

returns at the time she filed the false federal returns.

Hodge faces a maximum penalty of 5 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Sentencing has been scheduled for July 7, 2003.

This case is the result of a joint investigation by the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation and the United States Attorney's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph L. Evans.