



---

## **PRESS RELEASE**

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**March 1, 2002**

For Information Contact Public Affairs  
Mike Johns (602) 514-7566

# **SAFFORD MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FILING A FALSE CLAIM**

**TUCSON, ARIZONA** -- The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced that ANTHONY J. MERRICK, also known as PAUL D. LUCKETTE, of Safford, Arizona, pled guilty today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Charles R. Pyle to one count of filing a false claim for refund with the Internal Revenue Service, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 287.

MERRICK was indicted on August 29, 2001, on fifteen counts of false claims against the government. According to the indictment, MERRICK, who was also known as Paul Luckette, filed false and fictitious claims for refund by preparing and filing 15 U.S. Individual Income Tax Returns. MERRICK has pleaded guilty to Count 6 of the indictment which charged him with filing a 1998 Form 1040 in the name of Paula M. Cartwright and claiming a refund of \$4,317.00.

Judge Pyle scheduled sentencing for May 10, 2002, before U.S. District Court Judge John M. Roll. MERRICK faces a sentence of between 10 and 18 months and up to a \$250,000 fine, or both.

This investigation was conducted by special agents of the Phoenix Field Office of IRS Criminal Investigation in Tucson. The prosecution is being handled by United States Attorney's Office in Tucson, Arizona.