



Department of Justice

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NORCROSS RETURN PREPARER INDICTED FOR CLAIMING FRAUDULENT TELEPHONE EXCISE TAX REFUNDS

Atlanta, GA – ONESSIMUS GOVEREH, a/k/a “Tony,” 27, of Zimbabwe, Africa, has been indicted by a federal grand jury and this morning made his initial appearance on multiple charges relating to a false tax refund scheme. GOVEREH’s detention hearing has now been scheduled for June 4, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. before United States Magistrate Clayton Scofield.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, “This defendant allegedly cited very specific tax credits that are meant to legitimately help those who are truly eligible, and used it as a tool for illegal gains, for his clients and himself. His clients trusted him. He allegedly knew the rules and the legal use of those deductions, and betrayed the trust of his clients.”

IRS Criminal Investigation Special Agent in Charge Rebecca A. Sparkman said, “This case represents the IRS commitment to stopping this type of fraud in its tracks. Bad return preparers beware – cheating the American people through tax crimes will not be tolerated.”

According to the indictment and information in court today: GOVEREH prepared and filed 20 income tax returns for 2006 that claimed false credits based on the “Telephone Excise Tax Refund” (TETR). The TETR is a one-time credit available on 2006 income tax returns designed to refund previously-collected federal excise taxes on long-distance telephone service paid from February 2003 through August 2006. The indictment alleges that the total amount of false TETR credit claims to the IRS was \$86,023.

On February 15, 2007, IRS Special Agents executed a search warrant at “Kingdom Tax Service,” also doing business as “Icon Tax Service,” located in Norcross, Georgia. According to the affidavit, the IRS Fraud Detection Center in Ogden, Utah identified 66 income tax returns which listed GOVEREH as the paid preparer. These returns claimed false TETR credits ranging from \$227 to \$7,407 each and totaling \$261,537. According

to the affidavit, more than \$568,675 in fraudulent refunds involving inflated TETR credits had been released from the Icon Tax Service location.

If convicted, the defendant faces a maximum potential sentence of five years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 for each count of making, presenting, and assisting others in submitting false claims for refund.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the IRS-Criminal Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney Paul Monnin is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.