



U.S. Department of Justice

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Event: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Michael Collins

Belleville Businessman Pleads Guilty to Tax Charges

Michael Collins, 47, of Belleville, Michigan, pleaded guilty to four counts of attempting to evade and defeat the payment of tax, Acting United States Attorney Terrence G. Berg announced.

Mr. Berg was joined in the announcement by Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division.

According to court records, during 2001 through 2004, Collins received over \$230,000 in Form W-2 taxable income and failed to file his required federal income tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service. Collins also filed fraudulent Form W-4s with his employer falsely claiming that he was "exempt" from tax withholdings. Employers use the IRS Form W-4 to determine the amount of tax withholdings that are needed to be deducted from an employee's wages. Collins was a business analyst who assisted troubled businesses in helping them improve their situation.

According to court records, during 2003, Collins mailed four false and fictitious

instruments known as "Registered Bills of Exchange," totaling over \$118,000, to the IRS with written instructions that these fictitious instruments were to be used to pay his tax due and owing. A false "Register Bill of Exchange" is typically defined as a negotiable financial instrument where the payee authorizes the U.S. Treasury to disburse the funds to the IRS.

Acting United States Attorney Berg said, "Enforcing the law against individuals who intentionally conceal income and evade taxes is a vital element in maintaining public confidence in our tax system. We should not expect the honest taxpayer to foot the bill for those who hide income from the IRS."

"The law is crystal clear; people must pay their taxes," said Aouate. "IRS Criminal Investigation will vigorously investigate those individuals who knowingly and willfully evade their tax obligation."

A sentencing date was set for June 11, 2009, at 2:00 pm before United States District Court Judge Arthur J. Tarnow.

Mr. Berg commended the special agents of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Bruce C. Judge is prosecuting the case.