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**BRONX TAX PREPARER SENTENCED TO 34 MONTHS**  
**BY U.S. IN FRAUDULENT TAX PREPARATION SCHEME**

DAVID N. KELLEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that KOFI BAAH was sentenced to 34 months in prison for preparing fraudulent federal income tax returns for clients for the tax years 1997 through 2000. He was sentenced by United States District Judge JED S. RAKOFF.

According to the 10-count Information, BAAH, who operated the "Star Assurance Income Tax Center" in the Bronx, prepared individual federal income tax returns for hundreds of clients for the tax years 1997 through 2000. The Information charged that BAAH inflated his clients' personal deductions and created thousands of dollars of wholly fictitious expenses and deductions, which fraudulently lowered the clients' reported tax income and their ultimate tax liability.

The inflated and fictitious personal items BAAH created included charitable contributions and job-related, miscellaneous, dependent care and medical expenses, according to the

Information. After signing these falsified individual returns, BAAH had his clients sign and file them, so that they could receive hundreds of thousands dollars in income tax refunds to which they were not lawfully entitled.

BAAH pled guilty to the Information on June 30, 2003. At the plea, he admitted that he assisted in preparing approximately 2,000 tax returns that contained false information, in addition to the 10 charged in the Information.

Mr. KELLEY praised the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation, New York Field Office for its efforts in this case.

Assistant United States Attorney JENNIFER MOORE is in charge of the prosecution.

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