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**THIRD EASTERN SHORE RESIDENT
PLEADS GUILTY TO TAX FRAUD CONSPIRACY**

Baltimore, Maryland. United States Attorney Thomas M. DiBiagio announced that Paula Dickerson, age 49, of Grasonville, Maryland, plead guilty today before U.S. District Court Chief Judge Benson E. Legg to charges of conspiracy to defraud the government.

According to the statement of facts provided to the court as part of the plea agreement, Dickerson admitted that beginning in March, 1999, Dickerson and Loring White, age 41, of Stevensonville, Maryland entered into a scheme whereby they prepared false, fictitious and fraudulent tax documents for numerous individuals in Maryland. In February, 2002, the scheme expanded to include Ginger Turner, age 35, or Grasonville, Maryland. The tax documents prepared by the three co-conspirators, including W-2 forms reflecting fictitious employment, income and withholdings information, were then used to file tax returns seeking refunds and earned income credit to which the filing individuals were not entitled. Neither the employers whose names appear on the W-2 forms, nor the tax preparation services which prepared and submitted the returns based upon the false W-2 forms, knew of the fraudulent W-2 forms.

Together, over a period of three tax years, Dickerson, White and Turner caused the United States to pay at least \$181,042 on false claims. An additional \$64,799 was claimed but not paid when the Internal Revenue Service discovered the fraud.

Dickerson faces a maximum sentence of 10 years and is scheduled to be sentenced on July 23, 2004. White was recently sentenced to 37 months in prison for his part in the scheme. Turner plead guilty on March 5, 2004, to her part in the scheme and is scheduled to be sentenced on June 9, 2004.

This case was investigated by the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Tamera L. Fine.