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STOCKTON MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FALSE TAX RETURN SCHEME

United States Attorney John K. Vincent announced today that HENRY MAURICE HUNTER, 30, of Stockton, California, plead guilty this morning before Chief U.S. District Court Judge William B. Shubb to filing false claims against the United States. Judgment and sentencing has been set before Judge Shubb for June 12, 2002 at 9:00 a.m., where HUNTER faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison and up to a \$250,000 fine.

As part of his guilty plea, HUNTER admitted that during the period of January through April of 2001, he obtained false Forms W-2 on behalf of himself and others, which were submitted to the Internal Revenue Service in order to obtain fraudulent tax refunds. The Forms W-2 HUNTER procured listed the claimant's correct name, but contained false information about the claimant's employer and the amount of income earned. These false Forms W-2 reflected a sufficient amount of withheld income to entitle the claimant to the Earned Income Credit, a subsidy for low income families, and resulted in an average fraudulent refund of approximately \$4,300. In total, HUNTER was responsible for the submission of fraudulent returns to the IRS seeking in excess of \$270,000 in refunds. HUNTER admitted as part of his plea that in exchange for acquiring these false Forms W-2, he received, or expected to receive, a percentage of the fraudulent returns ultimately obtained.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney James P. Arguelles and was

investigated by the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Division and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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