



Department of Justice

Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown
Eastern District of California

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BAKERSFIELD RESIDENT CHARGED IN FALSE TAX SCHEME

FRESNO, Calif.—Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced today that a federal grand jury returned a two-count indictment yesterday charging SHONTI N. CORKER, 25, of Bakersfield, Calif., with presenting false claims against the government.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Mark J. McKeon, who is prosecuting the case, the indictment alleges that in 2004 and 2005, CORKER filed false tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service claiming large refunds. She claimed an Earned Income Credit, a subsidy for low-income families. In order to qualify for the credit, one must work and earn income. For the years 2003 and 2004, CORKER submitted tax returns using false W-2 forms that listed employers she had never worked for, income she had not earned, and withholding tax she had not paid. For the year 2003, she claimed a tax refund of \$4,777 and for the year 2004, she claimed a refund of \$5,212.

If convicted of this charge, CORKER faces a maximum of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. However, the actual sentence will be dictated by the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of factors, and will be imposed at the discretion of the court.

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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