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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **LITTLEFIELD MAN SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS FOR ATTEMPTING TO DEFRAUD IRS WITH WORTHLESS 'WARRANT'**

**PHOENIX, ARIZONA** - The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced today that RICHARD D. COOPER, 70, of Littlefield, Arizona, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Earl H. Carroll to 24 months imprisonment, followed by three years of supervised release, and a \$40,000 fine, for knowingly submitting a worthless \$87,934.74 "Lien Draft/Comptroller Warrant" in a fraudulent attempt to pay off income taxes he owed the I.R.S for the years 1987 through 1992 and to qualify for a refund in excess of \$43,000.

COOPER was convicted by a jury on October 2, 2001, of one count of corruptly endeavoring to obstruct the due administration of the internal revenue laws, in violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7212, and one count in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 287, for knowingly filing a false claim to a government agency. At the time COOPER submitted the fraudulent warrant – which was the same sort used by Leroy Schweitzer, former head of the Montana Freemen – the jury concluded that he knew it had no monetary value. Evidence at trial also revealed that COOPER has not filed federal income tax returns for some 30 years despite owning multiple rental properties and a laundromat in the Provo, Utah area.

(MORE)

COOPER could have received a maximum sentence of eight years in prison, a fine of \$500,000, or both. The judge ordered that he self-surrender on January 28, 2002, to begin his sentence. Upon release from prison, he will be required to pay his back taxes to the IRS

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Phoenix Field Office of Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation. The prosecution was handled by Stephen G. Winerip, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

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