Department of Justice

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Southern District of Indiana

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TAX PREPARER CHARGED WITH PREPARING FALSE TAX RETURNS

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS - Joseph H. Hogsett, U.S. Attorney, announced today that Patricia A. Crawford, 42, Indianapolis, was charged last Wednesday with 53 counts of aiding and abetting the preparation of a false tax return, following an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service. Crawford was arrested late Friday.

The indictment alleges that Crawford was a tax return preparer who owned a business called "Professional Tax Systems." For the tax years 2006, 2007, and 2008, Crawford prepared 53 tax returns for 26 taxpayers that contained false entries relating to non-qualifying dependents, inflated or false entries for medical and dental, gifts to charity, job expenses, business expenses, and credits relating to the Child Tax Credit, and Earned Income Credit.

IRS Criminal Investigation, Special Agent in Charge, Al Patton stated, "I want to remind everyone to choose carefully when hiring a tax preparer. We want everyone who files a tax return to take advantage of the deductions and credits to which they are entitled by law; however, no one is entitled to defraud the government. Don't forget that you, the taxpayer, are ultimately responsible for the return. We also want to put those dishonest tax return preparers on notice that we are watching their activities more closely than ever before."

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Gayle L. Helart, who is prosecuting the case for the government, Crawford faces a maximum of three years in prison and a $100,000 fine on each count. An initial hearing will be scheduled in Indianapolis before a U.S. Magistrate Judge.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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