



PRESS RELEASE

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**TAX PREPARER PLEADS GUILTY TO PREPARING
FALSE FEDERAL INCOME TAX RETURN**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court, Frances Rivas, 42, formerly of Albuquerque but currently a resident of Amarillo, Texas, pled guilty to preparing a false federal income tax return under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney's Office.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Rivas pled guilty to Count 16 of a 25-count indictment alleging that she prepared and presented false federal income tax returns. In entering her guilty plea, Rivas admitted that between Jan. 2008 and April 2011, she willfully prepared and presented to the IRS federal tax returns that she knew to be materially false and fraudulent. Rivas further admitted that she altered the tax return information provided by her clients by altering the clients' filing status, number of dependants, exemptions or W-2 wage information to increase the federal tax refund generated by the return. Rivas unlawfully caused at least \$98,396 in tax harm as a result of her fraudulent activity.

At sentencing, Rivas faces a maximum penalty of three years of imprisonment, a \$100,000 fine and one year of supervised release. Rivas remains on conditions of release pending her sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled. The plea agreement requires Rivas to pay full restitution, estimated at \$98,396, to the victims of her crimes.

The case was investigated by the IRS – Criminal Investigation, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeremy Pena.

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