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## **BRANCH PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL TAX CHARGES**

### *Willful Failure to File a Tax Return and Impeding the Internal Revenue Service*

**SHREVEPORT, La.** - United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced that Randy L. Branch, age 54, of Ruston, Louisiana, entered guilty pleas to two tax charges: Impeding the Internal Revenue Service and Willful Failure to File a Tax Return before U.S. District Judge Donald Walter today in Shreveport.

During the guilty plea hearing, IRS Criminal Investigation Special Agent Darrin Heusel testified that Branch failed to file his federal income tax return for the year 2004 after receiving a gross income of \$460,774. Agent Heusel also testified that Branch knowingly endeavored to obstruct and impede the due administration of the Internal Revenue laws by failing to file his income tax returns for the tax years, 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006. In order to avoid the payment of taxes, interest and penalties due, Branch used money orders, cashier's checks, and cash to conduct business and placed assets in the name of others.

The maximum penalty for Impeding the Internal Revenue Service is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$5,000. The maximum penalty of Willful Failure to File a Tax Return is imprisonment of one year, a fine of \$25,000 and the costs of prosecution. Branch is on bond pending his sentencing hearing, which is set for January 12, 2010.

This case was investigated by U.S. Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert W. Gillespie, Jr.

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