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**FORMER LAFAYETTE PARISH ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY
SENTENCED FOR TAX EVASION**

Defendant ordered to pay \$179,661.59 in restitution to the IRS

LAFAYETTE, La.: A former Lafayette Parish Assistant District Attorney was sentenced today by U. S. District Judge Richard T. Haik for tax evasion, United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced. Joseph Floyd Johnson, 50, of Lafayette, La., was sentenced to 18 months in prison and three years supervised release following confinement. He was also ordered to pay \$179,661.59 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service.

According to court testimony, Johnson failed to file his federal income tax return and evaded the payment of federal income taxes for the year 2003 after receiving income derived from his salary at the District Attorney's Office and his private law practice, totaling \$259,371.00. This resulted in the defendant not paying approximately \$84,581.00 in federal income tax for the calendar year 2003. In order to avoid the payment of taxes, interest and penalties due on assets and income, Johnson, on two occasions, purchased land and placed it in a nominee's name, had the nominee donate the property to his brother, and then had the brother get a loan so that he could build a house on the land. He falsely advised federal agents that the home was owned by his brother, when in reality, all of the land and the home belonged to him. Johnson failed to maintain an operating account for his private practice, and he deposited all proceeds from the law practice into a client trust account. In addition, Johnson knowingly failed to file income tax returns for the years 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008.

During all times relevant to the charges filed, Johnson was employed as an Assistant District Attorney with the Lafayette Parish District Attorney's Office and maintained a private law practice.

United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley stated: "The defendant at some point decided that he was going to keep the lifestyle that he had become accustomed to at all cost. He made a conscious decision to stop filing his tax returns and to stop paying the taxes he owed. No one can just disregard the tax laws without there being consequences. I hope this sentence sends a message that this is a serious crime that will be prosecuted and punished."

Special Agent in Charge of Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, James C. Lee, stated: "To maintain our faith in our nation's tax system, honest taxpayers need to be reassured that everyone is paying their fair share. IRS-Criminal Investigation, together with the Department of Justice, will investigate and prosecute those who evade their taxes."

This case was investigated by the U. S. Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case was prosecuted United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley.

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