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# **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, June 22, 2011  
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## **Minnesota man sentenced for preparing false claims for tax refunds**

MINNEAPOLIS – Earlier today in federal court in St. Paul, a Minnesota man was sentenced for preparing federal income tax returns for friends and relatives that included false information in an effort to inflate their tax refunds. United States District Court Judge Donovan W. Frank sentenced Tyrone Dwayne Houston to eight months in prison and four months of home confinement with electronic monitoring on one count of making false claims for tax refunds. Houston was indicted on February 8, 2011, and pleaded guilty on March 16, 2011.

Following today's sentencing, Kelly R. Jackson, Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation Division's St. Paul Field Office, said, "Return preparer fraud is a priority for the IRS-CID, and we have committed many resources to investigating and prosecuting cases just like this one. Taxpayers should be very selective in choosing a return preparer and have confidence that the preparer will prepare accurate tax returns and safeguard their financial information."

In his plea agreement, Houston admitted that in preparing federal individual income tax returns for others, he falsely stated the wage information of individuals in order to obtain tax refunds that exceeded the amounts the various taxpayers were actually entitled to receive. Houston, who was paid for preparing tax returns for others, admittedly filed approximately 24 false returns, along with two for himself, for tax years 2005 and 2006. The total loss to the Internal Revenue Service because of his actions is approximately \$117,065.

This case was the result of an investigation by the IRS-CID. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nicole A. Engisch.

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Per U.S. Department of Justice policy, the U.S. Attorney's Office is not allowed to provide the age and city of residence for defendants charged in criminal tax cases.

