NEWS

# Tampa Man Sentenced To Prison For Stolen Identity Refund Fraud

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 29, 2014

Tampa, FL – U.S. District Judge James S. Moody, Jr. today sentenced Robert L. Wimbush to 3 years and 9 months in federal prison for access device fraud and aggravated identity theft. The court also ordered Wimbush to forfeit $9,530 which is traceable to proceeds of the offense. Wimbush pleaded guilty on January 21, 2014.

According to court documents and evidence introduced at sentencing, Wimbush used prepaid debit cards issued in the names of other individuals to make cash withdrawals from ATMs in the Tampa area. The withdrawn funds were largely the result of refunds from fraudulently-filed federal income tax returns that had been deposited onto the cards. For example, on October 31, 2012, Wimbush drove to an ATM at a credit union in Tampa, used a prepaid debit card issued in the name of another individual ("W.G."), and withdrew $490 from the ATM. W.G. was a victim of identity theft and was not aware that a debit card had been obtained in her name. She had not authorized Wimbush or anyone else to obtain a debit card in her name. Between June 30, 2012 and December 10, 2012, more than $6,300 was withdrawn from the account associated with that card.

Wimbush received the fraudulent debit cards from Brian E. Simmons and Wimbush's aunt, Tressa V. Guy. Simmons and Guy were charged in a related case. On February 27, 2014, U.S. District Judge Virginia Hernandez Covington sentenced the pair for their involvement in a stolen identity refund fraud scheme. Simmons was sentenced to 16 years in federal prison. Guy was sentenced to 10 years and one month in federal prison. Wimbush's sister, Ashley Guy, previously pleaded guilty in a separate stolen identity refund fraud case. She was sentenced last week to 7 years in federal prison.

This case was investigated by Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation and the Tampa Police Department. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Matthew J. Mueller and Trial Attorney Jason H. Poole of the Department of Justice, Tax Division.

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