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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE                                                                                                 TAX

FRIDAY, APRIL10, 2015                                                 (202) 514-2007

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**SEVEN LOUISIANA RESIDENTS INDICTED IN TAX FRAUD SCHEME**

WASHINGTON – Seven Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana, residents were indicted today on charges of conspiracy to defraud the United States, theft of public money, mail fraud, aggravated identity theft and conspiracy to commit money laundering, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciraolo of the Justice Department’s Tax Division and U.S. Attorney Kenneth Allen Polite Jr. of the Eastern District of Louisiana. According to the indictment, the defendants conspired to file false income tax returns using stolen identities and then launder the resulting fraudulent tax refunds.

The indictment charges Corey Lewis aka Coco, 37, Angela Chaney, 43, Cedrick Mitchell aka Skeet, 39, Craig Lewis, 40, Brad Lewis aka Bird, 32, Thaddeus Richardson, 49, and Martin Jackson Sr., 48,with conspiracy to defraud the United States, conspiracy to commit money laundering, conspiracy to commit mail fraud and conspiracy to commit theft of public money. In addition, Corey Lewis, Chaney, Richardson and Jackson Sr.were charged with various counts of theft of public money. Chaney was also charged with six counts of mail fraud and five counts of aggravated identity theft. Corey Lewis was additionally charged with three counts of aggravated identity theft.

According to the allegations in the indictment, the defendants used individuals’ names and social security numbers in order to prepare false tax returns that claimed large tax refunds.  The refund checks were mailed to addresses in Louisiana, including to post office boxes that were opened by members of the conspiracy. Once the tax refund checks were received, members of the conspiracy falsely endorsed the checks and cashed them. Corey Lewis, Chaney and Mitchell deposited fraudulently obtained U.S. Treasury checks into bank accounts under their control. Richardson and Jackson Sr. deposited checks into their business accounts, then provided some of the proceeds to their co-conspirators and kept the remaining proceeds for themselves.

If convicted, the defendants each face a statutory maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for each mail fraud count and each money laundering conspiracy charge, a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in prison for each theft of public money count, a statutory maximum sentence of five years in prison for each conspiracy count, and a mandatory minimum sentence of two years in prison for each count of aggravated identity theft.  The defendants also face potential fines, forfeiture and restitution.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciraolo and U.S. Attorney Polite commended special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, who investigated the case, and Trial Attorneys Hayden Brockett and Lauren Castaldi of the Tax Division and Assistant U.S. Attorney Dall Kammer of the Eastern District of Louisiana, who are prosecuting the case.

The charges contained in the indictment are only allegations. A person is presumed innocent unless and until he or she is proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

Additional information about the Tax Division and its enforcement efforts may be found on the division’s [website](http://www.justice.gov/tax/).

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