

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

JEFFREY SHELBY, JR.

No. 14 CR 742

Judge Sara L. Ellis

PLEA AGREEMENT

1. This Plea Agreement between the United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, ZACHARY T. FARDON, and defendant JEFFREY SHELBY, JR., and his attorney, GARY ADAIR, is made pursuant to Rule 11 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. The parties to this Agreement have agreed upon the following:

Charges in This Case

2. The information in this case charges defendant with two counts of willfully assisting in the preparation and presentation of false tax returns, in violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7206(2).

3. Defendant has read the charges against him contained in the information, and those charges have been fully explained to him by his attorney.

4. Defendant fully understands the nature and elements of the crimes with which he has been charged.

Charges to Which Defendant Is Pleading Guilty

5. By this Plea Agreement, defendant agrees to enter a voluntary plea of guilty to the following counts of the information: Count One, which charges

defendant with willfully aiding and assisting in the preparation and presentation to the IRS of a false United States Individual Income Tax Return for calendar year 2009 on behalf of Taxpayer TB, in violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7206(2); and Count Two, which charges defendant with willfully aiding and assisting in the preparation and presentation to the IRS of a false United States Individual Income Tax Return for calendar year 2011 on behalf of Taxpayer YP, in violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7206(2).

Factual Basis

6. Defendant will plead guilty because he is in fact guilty of the charges contained in Counts One and Two of the information. In pleading guilty, defendant admits the following facts and that those facts establish his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt and constitute relevant conduct pursuant to Guideline § 1B1.3:

a. With respect to Count One of the information:

As charged in Count One, on or about April 15, 2010, at Crest Hill, in the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, and elsewhere, defendant JEFFREY SHELBY, JR. willfully aided and assisted in the preparation and presentation to the IRS of a United States Individual Income Tax Return (Form 1040 with schedules and attachments) for calendar year 2009 on behalf of Taxpayer TB, which was materially false and fraudulent as to a material matter.

b. With respect to Count Two of the information:

As charged in Count Two, on or about February 27, 2012, 2012, at Crest Hill, in the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, and elsewhere, defendant JEFFREY SHELBY, JR. willfully aided and assisted in the preparation and presentation to the IRS of a United States Individual Income Tax Return (Form 1040 with schedules and attachments) for calendar year 2011 on behalf of Taxpayer YP, which was materially false and fraudulent as to a material matter.

More specifically, from at least approximately 2009 through 2012, SHELBY owned and operated a tax preparation service under the business name Shelby Investment LLC. Shelby Investment had two locations, one in Crest Hill, Illinois, and one in Joliet, Illinois; SHELBY worked primarily out of the Crest Hill location. Shelby Investment's services included preparing tax returns and filing, and causing to be filed, those tax returns on behalf of individual taxpayers with the IRS. While working at Shelby Investment, SHELBY prepared federal income tax returns and filed those returns on behalf of individual taxpayers.

For the tax years 2009 through 2012, SHELBY knowingly and willfully prepared and caused to be filed with the IRS hundreds of false and fraudulent income tax returns. SHELBY fraudulently and intentionally reduced the tax liabilities and increased the tax refunds for those taxpayers by, among other ways, overstating and misrepresenting taxpayers' eligibility to claim tax credits, namely, education credits and the Earned Income Credit; misrepresenting taxpayers' business income and expenses; and overstating and misrepresenting their gifts to

charity. By knowingly providing materially false information on the individual tax returns, SHELBY caused the United States to incur a tax loss of approximately \$5,350,243 from approximately 2009 to 2012.

Specifically, as charged in Count One, with respect to Taxpayer TB, on or about April 15, 2010, SHELBY willfully aided and assisted in the preparation and presentation to the IRS of a United States Individual Income tax Return (Form 1040 with schedules and attachments) for calendar year 2009, which was materially false and fraudulent as to a material matter. In particular, SHELBY knowingly caused to be falsely represented and stated in that return:

a. On Form 8863, Line 1(c), it falsely stated that Taxpayer TB had qualified education expenses totaling \$4,000; and

b. On Schedule A, Line 16, it falsely stated that Taxpayer TB made gifts to charity by cash or check totaling \$1,000.

As charged in Count Two, on or about February 27, 2012, at the Shelby Investment office in Crest Hill, Illinois, SHELBY met with a person who, unbeknownst to him at that time, was an undercover law enforcement agent posing as Taxpayer YP. On or about February 27, 2012, SHELBY willfully aided and assisted in the preparation and presentation to the IRS of a United States Individual Income tax Return (Form 1040 with schedules and attachments) for Taxpayer YP for calendar year 2011, which was materially false and fraudulent as to a material matters. In particular, SHELBY knowingly caused to be falsely represented and stated in that return:

a. On Form 1040, Line 12, and Schedule C-EZ, Line 3, it falsely stated that Taxpayer YP had business income totaling \$8,670; and

b. One Form 1040, Line 64a, it falsely stated that Taxpayer YP was entitled to an Earned Income Credit of \$3,094.

7. The foregoing facts are set forth solely to assist the Court in determining whether a factual basis exists for defendant's plea of guilty, and are not intended to be a complete or comprehensive statement of all the facts within defendant's personal knowledge regarding the charged crimes and related conduct.

Maximum Statutory Penalties

8. Defendant understands that the charges to which he is pleading guilty carry the following statutory penalties:

a. Count One carries a maximum sentence of 3 years' imprisonment. Count One also carries a maximum fine of \$250,000. Defendant further understands that the Court must order costs of prosecution, estimated not to exceed \$500. Defendant further understands that with respect to Count One the judge also may impose a term of supervised release of not more than one year.

b. Count Two carries a maximum sentence of 3 years' imprisonment. Count Two also carries a maximum fine of \$250,000. Defendant further understands that the Court must order costs of prosecution, estimated not to exceed \$500. Defendant further understands that with respect to Count Two, the judge also may impose a term of supervised release of not more than one year.

c. Defendant further understands that the Court may order restitution to any persons as agreed by the parties.

d. In accord with Title 18, United States Code, Section 3013, defendant will be assessed \$100 on each count to which he has pled guilty, in addition to any other penalty or restitution imposed.

e. Therefore, under the counts to which defendant is pleading guilty, the total maximum sentence is 6 years' imprisonment. In addition, defendant is subject to a total maximum fine of \$500,000, mandatory costs of prosecution, a period of supervised release, and special assessments totaling \$200, in addition to any restitution ordered by the Court.

Sentencing Guidelines Calculations

9. Defendant understands that in imposing sentence the Court will be guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines. Defendant understands that the Sentencing Guidelines are advisory, not mandatory, but that the Court must consider the Guidelines in determining a reasonable sentence.

10. For purposes of calculating the Sentencing Guidelines, the parties agree on the following points:

a. **Applicable Guidelines.** The Sentencing Guidelines to be considered in this case are those in effect at the time of sentencing. The following statements regarding the calculation of the Sentencing Guidelines are based on the Guidelines Manual currently in effect, namely the November 2014 Guidelines Manual.

b. Offense Level Calculations.

i. Counts One and Two are placed into a single group pursuant to Guideline § 3D1.2(d).

ii. The base offense level is 24, pursuant to Guideline §§ 2T1.4(a)(1) and 2T4.1(J), because the tax loss resulting from the offenses in the group and relevant conduct, approximately \$5,350,243, exceeded \$2,500,000 and was less than \$7,000,000.

iii. The base offense level is increased by two levels pursuant to Guideline § 2T1.4(b)(1)(B) because defendant was in the business of preparing and assisting in the preparation of tax returns.

iv. Defendant has clearly demonstrated a recognition and affirmative acceptance of personal responsibility for his criminal conduct. If the government does not receive additional evidence in conflict with this provision, and if defendant continues to accept responsibility for his actions within the meaning of Guideline § 3E1.1(a), including by furnishing the United States Attorney's Office and the Probation Office with all requested financial information relevant to his ability to satisfy any fine or restitution that may be imposed in this case, a two-level reduction in the offense level is appropriate.

v. In accord with Guideline § 3E1.1(b), defendant has timely notified the government of his intention to enter a plea of guilty, thereby permitting the government to avoid preparing for trial and permitting the Court to allocate its resources efficiently. Therefore, as provided by Guideline § 3E1.1(b), if the Court

determines the offense level to be 16 or greater prior to determining that defendant is entitled to a two-level reduction for acceptance of responsibility, the government will move for an additional one-level reduction in the offense level.

c. **Criminal History Category.** With regard to determining defendant's criminal history points and criminal history category, based on the facts now known to the government, defendant's criminal history points equal zero and defendant's criminal history category is I.

d. **Anticipated Advisory Sentencing Guidelines Range.** Therefore, based on the facts now known to the government, the anticipated offense level is 23, which, when combined with the anticipated criminal history category of I, results in an anticipated advisory sentencing guidelines range of 46 to 57 months' imprisonment, in addition to any supervised release, fine, and restitution the Court may impose.

e. Defendant and his attorney and the government acknowledge that the above guidelines calculations are preliminary in nature, and are non-binding predictions upon which neither party is entitled to rely. Defendant understands that further review of the facts or applicable legal principles may lead the government to conclude that different or additional guidelines provisions apply in this case. Defendant understands that the Probation Office will conduct its own investigation and that the Court ultimately determines the facts and law relevant to sentencing, and that the Court's determinations govern the final guideline calculation. Accordingly, the validity of this Agreement is not contingent upon the

probation officer's or the Court's concurrence with the above calculations, and defendant shall not have a right to withdraw his plea on the basis of the Court's rejection of these calculations.

f. Both parties expressly acknowledge that this Agreement is not governed by Fed. R. Crim. P. 11(c)(1)(B), and that errors in applying or interpreting any of the sentencing guidelines may be corrected by either party prior to sentencing. The parties may correct these errors either by stipulation or by a statement to the Probation Office or the Court, setting forth the disagreement regarding the applicable provisions of the guidelines. The validity of this Agreement will not be affected by such corrections, and defendant shall not have a right to withdraw his plea, nor the government the right to vacate this Agreement, on the basis of such corrections.

Cooperation

11. Defendant agrees he will fully and truthfully cooperate in any matter in which he is called upon to cooperate by a representative of the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois. This cooperation shall include providing complete and truthful information in any investigation and pre-trial preparation and complete and truthful testimony in any criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding. Defendant agrees to the postponement of his sentencing until after the conclusion of his cooperation.

Agreements Relating to Sentencing

12. At the time of sentencing, the government shall make known to the sentencing judge the extent of defendant's cooperation. If the government determines that defendant has continued to provide full and truthful cooperation as required by this Agreement, then the government shall move the Court, pursuant to Guideline § 5K1.1, to depart downward from the low end of the applicable guideline range, and shall recommend a sentence that includes a term of imprisonment in the custody of the Bureau of Prisons of 66 percent of the low end of the applicable guideline range. Defendant shall be free to recommend any sentence. Defendant understands that the decision to depart from the applicable guideline range rests solely with the Court.

13. If the government does not move the Court, pursuant to Guideline § 5K1.1, to depart from the applicable guideline range, as set forth above, the preceding paragraph of this Agreement will be inoperative, both parties shall be free to recommend any sentence, and the Court shall impose a sentence taking into consideration the factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a) as well as the Sentencing Guidelines without any downward departure for cooperation pursuant to § 5K1.1. Defendant may not withdraw his plea of guilty because the government has failed to make a motion pursuant to Guideline § 5K1.1.

14. It is understood by the parties that the sentencing judge is neither a party to nor bound by this Agreement and may impose a sentence up to the maximum penalties as set forth above. Defendant further acknowledges that if the

Court does not accept the sentencing recommendation of the parties, defendant will have no right to withdraw his guilty plea.

15. Regarding restitution, defendant agrees to pay restitution to the United States Treasury arising from the offense conduct and relevant conduct set forth above totaling \$5,350,243, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Sections 3663(a)(3) and 3664. Defendant understands that the amount of tax loss as calculated by the Internal Revenue Service may exceed the amount of tax due as calculated for restitution in the criminal case.

16. Restitution shall be due immediately, and paid pursuant to a schedule to be set by the Court at sentencing. Defendant acknowledges that pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 3664(k), he is required to notify the Court and the United States Attorney's Office of any material change in economic circumstances that might affect his ability to pay restitution.

17. Defendant agrees to pay the special assessment of \$200 at the time of sentencing with a cashier's check or money order payable to the Clerk of the U.S. District Court.

18. Defendant agrees that the United States may enforce collection of any fine or restitution imposed in this case pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Sections 3572, 3613, and 3664(m), notwithstanding any payment schedule set by the Court.

Acknowledgments and Waivers Regarding Plea of Guilty

Nature of Agreement

19. This Agreement is entirely voluntary and represents the entire agreement between the United States Attorney and defendant regarding defendant's criminal liability in case 14 CR 742.

20. This Agreement concerns criminal liability only. Except as expressly set forth in this Agreement, nothing herein shall constitute a limitation, waiver, or release by the United States or any of its agencies of any administrative or judicial civil claim, demand, or cause of action it may have against defendant or any other person or entity. The obligations of this Agreement are limited to the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois and cannot bind any other federal, state, or local prosecuting, administrative, or regulatory authorities, except as expressly set forth in this Agreement.

21. Defendant understands that nothing in this Agreement shall limit the Internal Revenue Service in its collection of any taxes, interest or penalties from defendant and his spouse. Defendant understands that the amount of tax as calculated by the IRS may exceed the amount of tax due as calculated for the criminal case.

Waiver of Rights

22. Defendant understands that by pleading guilty he surrenders certain rights, including the following:

a. **Right to be charged by indictment.** Defendant understands that he has a right to have the charges prosecuted by an indictment returned by a concurrence of twelve or more members of a grand jury consisting of not less than sixteen and not more than twenty-three members. By signing this Agreement, defendant knowingly waives his right to be prosecuted by indictment and to assert at trial or on appeal any defects or errors arising from the information, the information process, or the fact that he has been prosecuted by way of information.

b. **Trial rights.** Defendant has the right to persist in a plea of not guilty to the charges against him, and if he does, he would have the right to a public and speedy trial.

i. The trial could be either a jury trial or a trial by the judge sitting without a jury. However, in order that the trial be conducted by the judge sitting without a jury, defendant, the government, and the judge all must agree that the trial be conducted by the judge without a jury.

ii. If the trial is a jury trial, the jury would be composed of twelve citizens from the district, selected at random. Defendant and his attorney would participate in choosing the jury by requesting that the Court remove prospective jurors for cause where actual bias or other disqualification is shown, or by removing prospective jurors without cause by exercising peremptory challenges.

iii. If the trial is a jury trial, the jury would be instructed that defendant is presumed innocent, that the government has the burden of proving defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, and that the jury could not

convict him unless, after hearing all the evidence, it was persuaded of his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt and that it was to consider each count of the information separately. The jury would have to agree unanimously as to each count before it could return a verdict of guilty or not guilty as to that count.

iv. If the trial is held by the judge without a jury, the judge would find the facts and determine, after hearing all the evidence, and considering each count separately, whether or not the judge was persuaded that the government had established defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

v. At a trial, whether by a jury or a judge, the government would be required to present its witnesses and other evidence against defendant. Defendant would be able to confront those government witnesses and his attorney would be able to cross-examine them.

vi. At a trial, defendant could present witnesses and other evidence in his own behalf. If the witnesses for defendant would not appear voluntarily, he could require their attendance through the subpoena power of the Court. A defendant is not required to present any evidence.

vii. At a trial, defendant would have a privilege against self-incrimination so that he could decline to testify, and no inference of guilt could be drawn from his refusal to testify. If defendant desired to do so, he could testify in his own behalf.

c. **Waiver of appellate and collateral rights.** Defendant further understands he is waiving all appellate issues that might have been available if he had exercised his right to trial. Defendant is aware that Title 28, United States Code, Section 1291, and Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742, afford a defendant the right to appeal his conviction and the sentence imposed. Acknowledging this, defendant knowingly waives the right to appeal his conviction, any pre-trial rulings by the Court, and any part of the sentence (or the manner in which that sentence was determined), including any term of imprisonment and fine within the maximums provided by law, and including any order of forfeiture, in exchange for the concessions made by the United States in this Agreement. In addition, defendant also waives his right to challenge his conviction and sentence, and the manner in which the sentence was determined, in any collateral attack or future challenge, including but not limited to a motion brought under Title 28, United States Code, Section 2255. The waiver in this paragraph does not apply to a claim of involuntariness or ineffective assistance of counsel, nor does it prohibit defendant from seeking a reduction of sentence based directly on a change in the law that is applicable to defendant and that, prior to the filing of defendant's request for relief, has been expressly made retroactive by an Act of Congress, the Supreme Court, or the United States Sentencing Commission.

23. Defendant understands that by pleading guilty he is waiving all the rights set forth in the prior paragraphs. Defendant's attorney has explained those rights to him, and the consequences of his waiver of those rights.

Presentence Investigation Report/Post-Sentence Supervision

24. Defendant understands that the United States Attorney's Office in its submission to the Probation Office as part of the Pre-Sentence Report and at sentencing shall fully apprise the District Court and the Probation Office of the nature, scope, and extent of defendant's conduct regarding the charges against him, and related matters. The government will make known all matters in aggravation and mitigation relevant to sentencing, including the nature and extent of defendant's cooperation.

25. Defendant agrees to truthfully and completely execute a Financial Statement (with supporting documentation) prior to sentencing, to be provided to and shared among the Court, the Probation Office, and the United States Attorney's Office regarding all details of his financial circumstances, including his recent income tax returns as specified by the probation officer. Defendant understands that providing false or incomplete information, or refusing to provide this information, may be used as a basis for denial of a reduction for acceptance of responsibility pursuant to Guideline § 3E1.1 and enhancement of his sentence for obstruction of justice under Guideline § 3C1.1, and may be prosecuted as a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001 or as a contempt of the Court.

26. For the purpose of monitoring defendant's compliance with his obligations to pay a fine and restitution during any term of supervised release or probation to which defendant is sentenced, defendant further consents to the disclosure by the IRS to the Probation Office and the United States Attorney's

Office of defendant's individual income tax returns (together with extensions, correspondence, and other tax information) filed subsequent to defendant's sentencing, to and including the final year of any period of supervised release or probation to which defendant is sentenced. Defendant also agrees that a certified copy of this Agreement shall be sufficient evidence of defendant's request to the IRS to disclose the returns and return information, as provided for in Title 26, United States Code, Section 6103(b).

Other Terms

27. Defendant agrees to cooperate with the United States Attorney's Office in collecting any unpaid fine and restitution for which defendant is liable, including providing financial statements and supporting records as requested by the United States Attorney's Office.

28. Regarding matters relating to the Internal Revenue Service, defendant agrees as follows (nothing in this paragraph, however, precludes defendant or his spouse from asserting any legal or factual defense to taxes, interest, and penalties that may be assessed by the IRS):

a. Defendant agrees to cooperate with the Internal Revenue Service in any tax examination or audit of defendant which directly or indirectly relates to or arises out of the course of conduct that defendant has acknowledged in this Agreement, by transmitting to the IRS original records or copies thereof, and any additional books and records that the IRS may request.

b. Defendant will not object to a motion brought by the United States Attorney's Office for the entry of an order authorizing disclosure of documents, testimony and related investigative materials which may constitute grand jury material, preliminary to or in connection with any judicial proceeding, pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 6(e)(3)(E)(i). In addition, defendant will not object to the government's solicitation of consent from third parties who provided records or other materials to the grand jury pursuant to grand jury subpoenas, to turn those materials over to the Civil Division of the United States Attorney's Office, or an appropriate federal or state agency (including but not limited to the Internal Revenue Service), for use in civil or administrative proceedings or investigations, rather than returning them to the third parties for later summons or subpoena in connection with a civil or administrative proceeding involving, or investigation of, defendant. Nothing in this paragraph or the preceding paragraph precludes defendant from asserting any legal or factual defense to taxes, interest, and penalties that may be assessed by the IRS.

29. Defendant understands that, if convicted, a defendant who is not a United States citizen may be removed from the United States, denied citizenship, and denied admission to the United States in the future.

Conclusion

30. Defendant understands that this Agreement will be filed with the Court, will become a matter of public record, and may be disclosed to any person.

31. Defendant understands that his compliance with each part of this Agreement extends throughout the period of his sentence, and failure to abide by any term of the Agreement is a violation of the Agreement. Defendant further understands that in the event he violates this Agreement, the government, at its option, may move to vacate the Agreement, rendering it null and void, and thereafter prosecute defendant not subject to any of the limits set forth in this Agreement, or may move to resentence defendant or require defendant's specific performance of this Agreement. Defendant understands and agrees that in the event that the Court permits defendant to withdraw from this Agreement, or defendant breaches any of its terms and the government elects to void the Agreement and prosecute defendant, any prosecutions that are not time-barred by the applicable statute of limitations on the date of the signing of this Agreement may be commenced against defendant in accordance with this paragraph, notwithstanding the expiration of the statute of limitations between the signing of this Agreement and the commencement of such prosecutions.

32. Should the judge refuse to accept defendant's plea of guilty, this Agreement shall become null and void and neither party will be bound to it.

33. Defendant and his attorney acknowledge that no threats, promises, or representations have been made, nor agreements reached, other than those set forth in this Agreement, to cause defendant to plead guilty.

34. Defendant acknowledges that he has read this Agreement and carefully reviewed each provision with his attorney. Defendant further acknowledges that he understands and voluntarily accepts each and every term and condition of this Agreement.

AGREED THIS DATE: _____

ZACHARY T. FARDON
United States Attorney

JEFFREY SHELBY, JR.
Defendant

SARAH STREICKER
Assistant U.S. Attorney

GARY ADAIR
Attorney for Defendant