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Lamar Woman Sentenced and Ordered to Pay over $1.4 Million for Tax Fraud Scheme

As a part of the National Fraud Enforcement Division

ABERDEEN, MS – United States Attorney Scott F. Leary announced today that Patricia Jones, 44, of Lamar, Benton County, Mississippi was sentenced by Senior District Judge Sharion Aycock. After pleading guilty on an earlier date, Jones was sentenced to 50 months imprisonment, 3 years supervised release and ordered to pay $1,422,022 to her victims.

According to court documents, Patricia Jones submitted false and fraudulent IRS forms in order to obtain Employee Retention Credit (ERC) funds. ERC was designed to encourage employers to continue to pay employees during the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The defendant submitted these forms on behalf of herself and others, attempting to claim over $3.8 Million in fraudulent refunds and generating over $1.4 Million in fraudulent payments by the IRS to Jones and others.

U.S. Attorney Leary stated, "On April 7th, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division. Its core mission is to zealously investigate and prosecute those who fraudulently misuse taxpayer dollars. The initiative is working thanks to the hard work of federal investigators and prosecutors who devote themselves to these often-complex cases. I congratulate these men and woman who seek to ensure that taxpayer funded benefits go to where they are intended."

"Today's sentencing of Patricia Jones reaffirms our commitment to protecting the integrity of the nation's tax system," said Special Agent in Charge Demetrius Hardeman, IRS-CI Atlanta Field Office. "Individuals who cheat the American taxpayer undermine public trust and siphon resources intended to support our communities. IRS Criminal Investigation special agents are highly trained financial investigators, skilled at following the money, uncovering complex fraud schemes, and ensuring that individuals who attempt to cheat the American taxpayer are held fully accountable. We remain committed to protecting public trust by taking action against those who misuse federal relief programs."

This case was investigated by the IRS and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Clay Dabbs.

The National Fraud Enforcement Division efforts to combat fraud support President Trump's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, a whole-of-government effort chaired by Vice President J.D. Vance to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within Federal benefit programs.