



Hernando County Sheriff's Office

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Media Release

From: Denise M. Moloney
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Re: Sheriff Cracking Down on Fraudulent Tax Services

Date: February 26, 2013

The Hernando County Sheriff's Office conducted a joint investigation with the Tampa Area Alliance Financial Crimes Task Force relating to the filing of fraudulent tax returns. This alliance includes federal, state, Sheriff's, and local task force representatives. As a result, two search warrants were executed in Hernando County yesterday.

On scene were authorities from the Hernando County Sheriff's Office, Brooksville Police Department, Internal Revenue Service, and the Secret Service.

Detectives learned that LBS Tax Services in Brooksville and Spring Hill were conducting fraudulent activity pertaining to the filing of tax returns.

Detectives are asking that anyone that filed a tax return with LBS Tax Services and was given a refund amount and then was "advised" how to increase that amount using "questionable" income and/or expenses is requested to call Detective Bill Horvath in Economic Crimes immediately. Those returns are being evaluated during this investigation and that information will be discovered, so customer cooperation is requested to facilitate this investigation. Detective Horvath can be reached at 352-797-3732 or whorvath@hernandosheriff.org.

Sheriff Al Nienhuis said, "The Tampa Bay area, unfortunately, is a hot spot for fraudulent tax returns. Although these crimes are not violent, they can be very frustrating for the victim and very costly to the community. Victims can spend years trying to straighten out a stolen identity issue and the money stolen from the government costs us all millions of dollars in the long run. We are excited to see that our partners in the federal government are taking a strong stance against crooks who deliberately file fraudulent tax returns. This, of course, is

just the beginning. We have received intelligence over the past years suggesting that tax fraud suspects have fled larger jurisdictions to attempt to hide out in small counties like Hernando. We are going to work diligently to make sure that Hernando County is not a safe haven for tax fraud suspects. The time has come to use all of our intelligence and investigative resources to rid our community of these criminals. Even non-violent criminals need to understand that they have three choices: become a productive hard working citizen, leave Hernando County, or spend time in jail!"

Anyone with information on someone (an individual or a business) that is filing taxes fraudulently is encouraged to contact Crime Stoppers at 1-866-990-TIPS (8477) or <http://www.hernadosheriff.org/Tips>. You will remain anonymous and also be eligible for a reward up to \$1,000 cash!

Please keep in mind that law enforcement has no control over refund(s) that have been filed but not yet received. We also have no control or jurisdiction over the issuance or recovery of any tax refunds. Contact will need to be made with the IRS regarding any tax issues. The Sheriff's Office, or any law enforcement agency, is only involved in the criminal investigation of any fraudulent activity.