
PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

Bessemer Woman Pleads Guilty to Preparing False Tax Returns

MONTGOMERY – Doreen Smiley Jones, 63, of Bessemer, pleaded guilty Wednesday to a felony charge that she willfully aided or assisted in the preparation of an Alabama income tax return known to be false for a client of Jones’ tax preparation business, which partly resulted in a tax loss of \$44,366.

According to the plea agreement made public at the time of Jones’ plea hearing, between January 2017 and June 2019, Jones falsified or assisted in falsifying tax returns of 15 Alabama taxpayers for tax years 2016, 2017, and 2018. She prepared income tax returns, counseled or advised individuals on the preparation of tax returns, and assisted in preparing individual tax returns out of her Bessemer home.

Further investigation by the Alabama Department of Revenue’s (ALDOR) Investigations Division revealed the returns added inaccurate business losses, medical expenses, and/or charitable gifting.

The plea agreement also says the State agrees to recommend that Jones receive a suspended sentence of three years imprisonment along with a probationary sentence of five years. A special condition of Jones’ probation orders her to cease tax preparation services.

As part of the agreement, Jones is ordered to pay total restitution in the amount of \$48,284.80 – \$43,484.80 of which will be paid to ALDOR’s Investigations Division. The amount due to be paid to ALDOR includes the remaining amount not paid in tax to ALDOR (\$18,170), interest (\$3,131.80), and penalties (\$22,183) to which ALDOR is entitled to as of November 4, 2022. Jones will also pay \$4,800 in tax preparation fees that she charged taxpayers, who may request additional restitution and a restitution hearing within 30 days from the sentencing date. The State will not seek any additional income tax-related criminal charges against Jones for tax years 2016 – 2018.

State income tax revenue is earmarked for the Education Trust Fund and is one of the fund’s major funding components. This case was investigated by agents of ALDOR’s Investigations Division and prosecuted by the Special Prosecutions Division of the Alabama Attorney General’s Office.

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