THE TRUTH ABOUT FRIVOLOUS TAX ARGUMENTS

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This responds to some of the more common frivolous "legal" arguments made by individuals and groups who oppose compliance with the federal tax laws. These arguments are grouped under six general categories, with variations within each category. Each contention is briefly explained, followed by a discussion of the legal authority that rejects the contention. A final section explains the penalties that the courts may impose on those who pursue tax cases on frivolous grounds.

I. The Voluntary Nature of the Federal Income Tax System

A. Contention: The filing of a tax return is voluntary.

Some assert that they are not required to file federal tax returns because the filing of a tax return is voluntary. Proponents point to the fact that the IRS itself tells taxpayers in the Form 1040 instruction book that the tax system is voluntary. Additionally, the Supreme Court's opinion in Flora v. United States, 362 U.S. 145, 176 (1960), is often quoted for the proposition that "[o]ur system of taxation is based upon voluntary assessment and payment, not upon distraint."

The Law: The word "voluntary," as used in Flora and in IRS publications, refers to our system of allowing taxpayers to determine the correct amount of tax and complete the appropriate returns, rather than have the government determine tax for them. The requirement to file an income tax return is not voluntary and is clearly set forth in Internal Revenue Code §§ 6011(a), 6012(a), et seq., and 6072(a). See also Treas. Reg. § 1.6011-1(a).

Any taxpayer who has received more than a statutorily determined amount of gross income is obligated to file a return. Failure to file a tax return could subject the noncomplying individual to criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment, as well as civil penalties. In United States v. Tedder, 787 F.2d 540, 542 (10th Cir. 1986), the court clearly states, "although Treasury regulations establish voluntary compliance as the general method of income tax collection, Congress gave the Secretary of the Treasury the power to enforce the income tax laws through involuntary collection . . . . The IRS' efforts to obtain compliance with the tax laws are entirely proper."

Relevant Case Law:

Helvering v. Mitchell, 303 U.S. 391, 399 (1938) – the U.S. Supreme Court stated that "[i]n assessing income taxes, the Government relies primarily upon the disclosure by the taxpayer of the relevant facts . . . in his annual

return. To ensure full and honest disclosure, to discourage fraudulent attempts to evade the tax, Congress imposes [either criminal or civil] sanctions."

United States v. Tedder, 787 F.2d 540, 542 (10th Cir. 1986) – the court upheld a conviction for willfully failing to file a return, stating that the premise "that the tax system is somehow 'voluntary' . . . is incorrect."

United States v. Richards, 723 F.2d 646, 648 (8th Cir. 1983) – the court upheld conviction and fines imposed for willfully failing to file tax returns, stating that the claim that filing a tax return is voluntary "was rejected in United States v. Drefke, 707 F.2d 978, 981 (8th Cir. 1983), wherein the court described appellant's argument as 'an imaginative argument, but totally without arguable merit.'"

Woods v. Commissioner, 91 T.C. 88, 90 (1988) – the court rejected the claim that reporting income taxes is strictly voluntary, referring to it as a "'tax protester' type" argument, and found Woods liable for the penalty for failure to file a return.

Johnson v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1999-312, 78 T.C.M. (CCH) 468, 471 (1999) – the court found Johnson liable for the failure to file penalty and rejected his argument "that the tax system is voluntary so that he cannot be forced to comply" as "frivolous."

B. Contention: Payment of tax is voluntary.

In a similar vein, some argue that they are not required to pay federal taxes because the payment of federal taxes is voluntary. Proponents of this position argue that our system of taxation is based upon voluntary assessment and payment.

The Law: The requirement to pay taxes is not voluntary and is clearly set forth in section 1 of the Internal Revenue Code, which imposes a tax on the taxable income of individuals, estates, and trusts as determined by the tables set forth in that section. (Section 11 imposes a tax on the taxable income of corporations.) Furthermore, the obligation to pay tax is described in section 6151, which requires taxpayers to submit payment with their tax returns. Failure to pay taxes could subject the noncomplying individual to criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment, as well as civil penalties.

In discussing section 6151, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals stated that "when a tax return is required to be filed, the person so required 'shall' pay

such taxes to the internal revenue officer with whom the return is filed at the fixed time and place. The sections of the Internal Revenue Code *imposed a duty* on Drefke to file tax returns and pay the . . . tax, a duty which he chose to ignore." United States v. Drefke, 707 F.2d 978, 981 (8th Cir. 1983).

Relevant Case Law:

United States v. Bressler, 772 F.2d 287, 291 (7th Cir. 1985) – the court upheld Bressler's conviction for tax evasion, noting, "[he] has refused to file income tax returns and pay the amounts due not because he misunderstands the law, but because he disagrees with it . . . . [O]ne who refuses to file income tax returns and pay the tax owing is subject to prosecution, even though the tax protester believes the laws requiring the filing of income tax returns and the payment of income tax are unconstitutional."

Wilcox v. Commissioner, 848 F.2d 1007, 1008 (9th Cir. 1988) – the court rejected Wilcox's argument that payment of taxes is voluntary for American citizens, stating that "paying taxes is not voluntary" and imposing a $1,500 penalty against Wilcox for raising frivolous claims.

Schiff v. United States, 919 F.2d 830, 833 (2d Cir. 1990), cert. denied, 501 U.S. 1238 (1991) – the court rejected Schiff's arguments as meritless and upheld imposition of the civil fraud penalty, stating "[t]he frivolous nature of this appeal is perhaps best illustrated by our conclusion that Schiff is precisely the sort of taxpayer upon whom a fraud penalty for failure to pay income taxes should be imposed."

United States v. Gerads, 999 F.2d 1255, 1256 (8th Cir. 1993) – the court stated that "[taxpayers'] claim that payment of federal income tax is voluntary clearly lacks substance" and imposed sanctions in the amount of $1,500 "for bringing this frivolous appeal based on discredited, tax-protestor arguments."

Packard v. United States, 7 F. Supp. 2d 143, 145 (D. Conn. 1998) – the court dismissed Packard's refund suit for recovery of penalties for failure to pay income tax and failure to pay estimated taxes where the taxpayer contested the obligation to pay taxes on religious grounds, noting that "the ability of the Government to function could be impaired if persons could refuse to pay taxes because they disagreed with the Government's use of tax revenues."

C. Contention: The IRS must prepare federal tax returns for a person who fails to file.

Proponents of this argument contend that section 6020(b) obligates the IRS to prepare a federal tax return for a person who does not file a return. Thus, those who subscribe to this contention believe that they are not required to file a return for themselves.

The Law: Section 6020(b) merely provides the IRS with a mechanism for determining the tax liability of a taxpayer who has failed to file a return. Section 6020(b) does not require the IRS to prepare tax returns for persons who do not file and it does not excuse the taxpayer from civil penalties or criminal liability for failure to file.

Relevant Case Law:

United States v. Lacy, 658 F.2d 396, 397 (5th Cir. 1981) – the court, in upholding the taxpayer's conviction for willfully and knowingly failing to file a return, stated that " . . . the purpose of section 6020(b)(1) is to provide the Internal Revenue Service with a mechanism for assessing the civil liability of a taxpayer who has failed to file a return, not to excuse that taxpayer from criminal liability which results from that failure."

Schiff v. United States, 919 F.2d 830, 832 (2nd Cir. 1990) – the court rejected the taxpayer's argument that the IRS must prepare a substitute return pursuant to section 6020(b) prior to assessing deficient taxes, stating "[t]here is no requirement that the IRS complete a substitute return."

Moore v. Commissioner, 722 F.2d 193, 196 (5th Cir. 1984) – the court stated that "section [6020(b)] provides the Secretary with some recourse should a taxpayer fail to fulfill his statutory obligation to file a return, and does not supplant the taxpayer's original obligation to file established by 26 U.S.C. § 6012."

II. The Meaning of Income: Taxable Income and Gross Income

A. Contention: Wages, tips, and other compensation received for personal services are not income.

This argument asserts that wages, tips, and other compensation received for personal services are not income, because there is allegedly no taxable gain when a person "exchanges" labor for money. Under this theory, wages are

not taxable income because people have basis in their labor equal to the fair market value of the wages they receive; thus, there is no gain to be taxed.

Some take a different approach and argue that the Sixteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution did not authorize a tax on wages and salaries, but only on gain or profit.

The Law: For federal income tax purposes, "gross income" means all income from whatever source derived and includes compensation for services. I.R.C. § 61. Any income, from whatever source, is presumed to be income under section 61, unless the taxpayer can establish that it is specifically exempted or excluded. In Reese v. United States, 24 F.3d 228, 231 (Fed. Cir. 1994), the court stated, "an abiding principle of federal tax law is that, absent an enumerated exception, gross income means all income from whatever source derived."

The Sixteenth Amendment provides that Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes on income, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several states, and without regard to any census or enumeration. U.S. Const. amend. XVI. Furthermore, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the income tax laws enacted subsequent to ratification of the Sixteenth Amendment in Brushaber v. Union Pacific R.R., 240 U.S. 1 (1916). Since that time, the courts have consistently upheld the constitutionality of the federal income tax. For a further discussion of the constitutionality of the federal income tax laws, see section IV. of this outline.

All compensation for personal services, no matter what the form of payment, must be included in gross income. This includes salary or wages paid in cash, as well as the value of property and other economic benefits received because of services performed, or to be performed in the future. Furthermore, criminal and civil penalties have been imposed against individuals relying upon this frivolous argument.

Relevant Case Law:

Commissioner v. Glenshaw Glass Co., 348 U.S. 426, 429-30 (1955) – referring to the statute's words "income derived from any source whatever," the Supreme Court stated, "this language was used by Congress to exert in this field 'the full measure of its taxing power.' . . . And the Court has given a liberal construction to this broad phraseology in recognition of the intention of Congress to tax all gains except those specifically exempted."

Commissioner v. Kowalski, 434 U.S. 77 (1977) – the Supreme Court found that payments are considered income where the payments are undeniably accessions to wealth, clearly realized, and over which a taxpayer has complete dominion.

United States v. Connor, 898 F.2d 942, 943-44 (3d Cir.), cert. denied, 497 U.S. 1029 (1990) – the court stated that "[e]very court which has ever considered the issue has unequivocally rejected the argument that wages are not income."

Lonsdale v. Commissioner, 661 F.2d 71, 72 (5th Cir. 1981) – the court rejected as "meritless" the taxpayer's contention that the "exchange of services for money is a zero-sum transaction . . . ."

McCoy v. United States, 88 A.F.T.R.2d (RIA) 7116, 2001 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 18986 (N.D. Tex. Nov. 16, 2001) – the court rejected the taxpayer's argument that wages received were not income and described this position as meritless.

Cheek v. United States, 498 U.S. 192 (1991) – the Supreme Court reversed and remanded Cheek's conviction of willfully failing to file federal income tax returns and willfully attempting to evade income taxes solely on the basis of erroneous jury instructions. The Court noted, however, that Cheek's argument, that he should be acquitted because he believed in good faith that the income tax law is unconstitutional, "is unsound, not because Cheek's constitutional arguments are not objectively reasonable or frivolous, which they surely are, but because the [law regarding willfulness in criminal cases] does not support such a position." Id. (emphasis added). On remand, Cheek was convicted on all counts and sentenced to jail for a year and a day. Cheek v. United States, 3 F.3d 1057 (7th Cir. 1993), cert. denied, 510 U.S. 1112 (1994).

Reading v. Commissioner, 70 T.C. 730 (1978), aff'd, 614 F.2d 159 (8th Cir. 1980) – the court said the entire amount received from the sale of one's services constitutes income within the meaning of the Sixteenth Amendment.

United States v. Richards, 723 F.2d 646, 648 (8th Cir. 1983) – the court upheld conviction and fines imposed for willfully failing to file tax returns, stating that the taxpayer's contention that wages and salaries are not income within the meaning of the Sixteenth Amendment is "totally lacking in merit."

United States v. Romero, 640 F.2d 1014, 1016 (9th Cir. 1981) – the court affirmed Romero's conviction for willfully failing to file tax returns, finding, in

part, that "[t]he trial judge properly instructed the jury on the meaning of ['income' and 'person']. Romero's proclaimed belief that he was not a 'person' and that the wages he earned as a carpenter were not 'income' is fatuous as well as obviously incorrect."

Abrams v. Commissioner, 82 T.C. 403, 413 (1984) – the court rejected the argument that wages are not income, sustained the failure to file penalty, and awarded damages of $5,000 for pursuing a position that was "frivolous and groundless . . . and maintained primarily for delay."

Cullinane v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1999-2, 77 T.C.M. (CCH) 1192, 1193 (1999) – noting that "[c]ourts have consistently held that compensation for services rendered constitutes taxable income and that taxpayers have no tax basis in their labor," the court found Cullinane liable for the failure to file penalty, stating that "[his] argument that he is not required to pay tax on compensation for services does not constitute reasonable cause."

Wheelis v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-102, 83 T.C.M. (CCH) 1543-45 (2002) – the court rejected the taxpayer's frivolous argument that his wages were not taxable based on his belief that "[p]roperty (money) exchanged for property (labor not subject to tax)" is not subject to income taxation. The court stated that such claims have been "consistently and thoroughly rejected" by the courts and imposed a penalty against Wheelis in the amount of $10,000 for making frivolous arguments.

B. Contention: Only foreign-source income is taxable.

Some maintain that there is no federal statute imposing a tax on income derived from sources within the United States by citizens or residents of the United States. They argue instead that federal income taxes are excise taxes imposed only on nonresident aliens and foreign corporations for the privilege of receiving income from sources within the United States. The premise for this argument is a misreading of sections 861, et seq., and 911, et seq., as well as the regulations under those sections.

The Law: As stated above, for federal income tax purposes, "gross income" means all income from whatever source derived and includes compensation for services. I.R.C. § 61. Further, Treasury Regulation § 1.1-1(b) provides, "[i]n general, all citizens of the United States, wherever resident, and all resident alien individuals are liable to the income taxes imposed by the Code whether the income is received from sources within or without the United States." I.R.C. sections 861 and 911 define the sources of income (U.S. versus non-U.S. source income) for such purposes as the

prevention of double taxation of income that is subject to tax by more than one country. These sections neither specify whether income is taxable, nor do they determine or define gross income. Further, these frivolous assertions are clearly contrary to well-established legal precedent.

Relevant Case Law:

Great-West Life Assur. Co. v. United States, 678 F.2d 180, 183 (Ct. Cl. 1982) – the court stated that "[t]he determination of where income is derived or 'sourced' is generally of no moment to either United States citizens or United States corporations, for such persons are subject to tax under I.R.C. § 1 and I.R.C. § 11, respectively, on their worldwide income."

Takaba v. Commissioner, 119 T.C. No. 18 (Dec. 16, 2002) – the court rejected the taxpayer's argument that income received from sources within the United States is not taxable income stating that "[t]he 861 argument is contrary to established law and, for that reason, frivolous." The Court imposed sanctions against the taxpayer in the amount of $15,000, as well as sanctions against the taxpayer's attorney in the amount of $10,500, for making such groundless arguments.

Williams v. Commissioner, 114 T.C. 136, 138 (2000) – the court rejected the taxpayer's argument that his income was not from any of the sources listed in Treas. Reg. § 1.861-8(a), characterizing it as "reminiscent of tax-protester rhetoric that has been universally rejected by this and other courts."

Corcoran v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-18, 83 T.C.M. (CCH) 1108, 1110 (2002) – the court rejected the taxpayers' argument that his income was not from any of the sources in Treas. Reg. § 1.861-8(f), stating that the "source rules [of sections 861 through 865] do not exclude from U.S. taxation income earned by U.S. citizens from sources within the United States." The court further required the taxpayers to pay a $2,000 penalty under section 6673(a)(1) because "they . . . wasted limited judicial and administrative resources."

Aiello v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1995-40, 69 T.C.M. (CCH) 1765 (1995) – the court rejected the taxpayer's argument that the only sources of income for purposes of section 61 are listed in section 861.

Madge v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2000-370, 80 T.C.M. (CCH) 804 (2000) – the court labeled as "frivolous" the position that only foreign income is taxable.

Solomon v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1993-509, 66 T.C.M. (CCH) 1201, 1202 (1993) – the court rejected the taxpayer's argument that his income was exempt from tax by operation of sections 861 and 911, noting that he had no foreign income and that section 861 provides that "compensation for labor or personal services performed in the United States . . . are items of gross income."

C. Contention: Federal Reserve Notes are not income.

Some assert that Federal Reserve Notes currently used in the United States are not valid currency and cannot be taxed, because Federal Reserve Notes are not gold or silver and may not be exchanged for gold or silver. This argument misinterprets Article I, Section 10 of the United States Constitution.

The Law: Congress is empowered "[t]o coin Money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the Standard of weights and measures." U.S. Const. Art. I, § 8, cl. 5. Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution prohibits the states from declaring as legal tender anything other than gold or silver, but does not limit Congress' power to declare the form of legal tender. See 31 U.S.C. § 5103; 12 U.S.C. § 411. In United States v. Rifen, 577 F.2d 1111 (8th Cir. 1978), the court affirmed a conviction for willfully failing to file a return, rejecting the argument that Federal Reserve Notes are not subject to taxation. "Congress has declared federal reserve notes legal tender . . . and federal reserve notes are taxable dollars." Id. at 1112. The courts have rejected this argument on numerous occasions.

Relevant Case Law:

United States v. Rickman, 638 F.2d 182, 184 (10th Cir. 1980) – the court affirmed the conviction for willfully failing to file a return and rejected the taxpayer's argument that "the Federal Reserve Notes in which he was paid were not lawful money within the meaning of Art. 1, § 8, United States Constitution."

United States v. Condo, 741 F.2d 238, 239 (9th Cir. 1984) – the court upheld the taxpayer's criminal conviction, rejecting as "frivolous" the argument that Federal Reserve Notes are not valid currency, cannot be taxed, and are merely "debts."

United States v. Daly, 481 F.2d 28, 30 (8th Cir.), cert. denied, 414 U.S. 1064 (1973) – the court rejected as "clearly frivolous" the assertion "that the only 'Legal Tender Dollars' are those which contain a mixture of gold and

silver and that only those dollars may be constitutionally taxed" and affirmed Daly's conviction for willfully failing to file a return.

Jones v. Commissioner, 688 F.2d 17 (6th Cir. 1982) – the court found the taxpayer's claim that his wages were paid in "depreciated bank notes" as clearly without merit and affirmed the Tax Court's imposition of an addition to tax for negligence or intentional disregard of rules and regulations.

III. The Meaning of Certain Terms Used in the Internal Revenue Code

A. Contention: Taxpayer is not a "citizen" of the United States, thus not subject to the federal income tax laws.

Some individuals argue that they have rejected citizenship in the United States in favor of state citizenship; therefore, they are relieved of their federal income tax obligations. A variation of this argument is that a person is a free born citizen of a particular state and thus was never a citizen of the United States. The underlying theme of these arguments is the same: the person is not a United States citizen and is not subject to federal tax laws because only United States citizens are subject to these laws.

The Law: The Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution defines the basis for United States citizenship, stating that "[a]ll persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside." The Fourteenth Amendment therefore establishes simultaneous state and federal citizenship. Claims that individuals are not citizens of the United States but are solely citizens of a sovereign state and not subject to federal taxation have been uniformly rejected by the courts.

Relevant Case Law:

O'Driscoll v. I.R.S., 1991 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 9829, at *5-6 (E.D. Pa. 1991) – the court stated, "despite [taxpayer's] linguistic gymnastics, he is a citizen of both the United States and Pennsylvania, and liable for federal taxes."

United States v. Sloan, 939 F.2d 499, 500 (7th Cir. 1991), cert. denied, 502 U.S. 1060, reh'g denied, 503 U.S. 953 (1992) – the court affirmed a tax evasion conviction and rejected Sloan's argument that the federal tax laws did not apply to him because he was a "freeborn, natural individual, a citizen of the State of Indiana, and a 'master' – not 'servant' – of his government."

United States v. Ward, 833 F.2d 1538, 1539 (11th Cir. 1987), cert. denied, 485 U.S. 1022 (1988) – the court found Ward's contention that he was not an "individual" located within the jurisdiction of the United States to be "utterly without merit" and affirmed his conviction for tax evasion.

United States v. Sileven, 985 F.2d 962 (8th Cir. 1993) – the court rejected the argument that the district court lacked jurisdiction because the taxpayer was not a federal citizen as "plainly frivolous."

United States v. Gerads, 999 F.2d 1255, 1256 (8th Cir. 1993) – the court rejected the Gerads' contention that they were "not citizens of the United States, but rather 'Free Citizens of the Republic of Minnesota' and, consequently, not subject to taxation" and imposed sanctions "for bringing this frivolous appeal based on discredited, tax-protestor arguments."

Bland-Barclay v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-20, 83 T.C.M. (CCH) 1119, 1121 (2002) – the court rejected taxpayers' claim that they were exempt from the federal income tax laws due to their status as "citizens of the Maryland Republic," characterized such arguments as "baseless and wholly without merit," and required taxpayers to pay a $1,500 penalty for making frivolous arguments.

Solomon v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1993-509, 66 T.C.M. (CCH) 1201, 1202-03 (1993) – the court rejected Solomon's argument that as an Illinois resident his income was from outside the United States, stating "[he] attempts to argue an absurd proposition, essentially that the State of Illinois is not part of the United States. His hope is that he will find some semantic technicality which will render him exempt from Federal income tax, which applies generally to all U.S. citizens and residents. [His] arguments are no more than stale tax protester contentions long dismissed summarily by this Court and all other courts which have heard such contentions."

B. Contention: The "United States" consists only of the District of Columbia, federal territories, and federal enclaves.

Some argue that the United States consists only of the District of Columbia, federal territories (e.g., Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.), and federal enclaves (e.g., American Indian reservations, military bases, etc.) and does not include the "sovereign" states. According to this argument, if a taxpayer does not live within the "United States," as so defined, he is not subject to the federal tax laws.

The Law: The Internal Revenue Code imposes a federal income tax upon all United States citizens and residents, not just those who reside in the District of Columbia, federal territories, and federal enclaves. In United States v. Collins, 920 F.2d 619, 629 (10th Cir. 1990), cert. denied, 500 U.S. 920 (1991), the court cited Brushaber v. Union Pac. R.R., 240 U.S. 1, 12-19 (1916), and noted the United States Supreme Court has recognized that the "sixteenth amendment authorizes a direct nonapportioned tax upon United States citizens throughout the nation, not just in federal enclaves." This frivolous contention has been uniformly rejected by the courts.

Relevant Case Law:

In re Becraft, 885 F.2d 547, 549-50 (9th Cir. 1989) – the court, observing that Becraft's claim that federal laws apply only to United States territories and the District of Columbia "has no semblance of merit," and noting that this attorney had previously litigated cases in the federal appeals courts that had "no reasonable possibility of success," imposed monetary damages and expressed the hope "that this assessment will deter Becraft from asking this and other federal courts to expend more time and resources on patently frivolous legal positions."

United States v. Ward, 833 F.2d 1538, 1539 (11th Cir. 1987), cert. denied, 485 U.S. 1022 (1988) – the court rejected as a "twisted conclusion" the contention "that the United States has jurisdiction over only Washington, D.C., the federal enclaves within the states, and the territories and possessions of the United States," and affirmed a tax evasion conviction.

Barcroft v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1997-5, 73 T.C.M. (CCH) 1666, 1667, appeal dismissed, 134 F.3d 369 (5th Cir. 1997) – noting that Barcroft's statements "contain protester-type contentions that have been rejected by the courts as groundless," the court sustained penalties for failure to file returns and failure to pay estimated income taxes.

C. Contention: Taxpayer is not a "person" as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, thus is not subject to the federal income tax laws.

Some maintain that they are not a "person" as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, and thus not subject to the federal income tax laws. This argument is based on a tortured misreading of the Code.

The Law: The Internal Revenue Code clearly defines "person" and sets forth which persons are subject to federal taxes. Section 7701(a)(14) defines "taxpayer" as any person subject to any internal revenue tax and

section 7701(a)(1) defines "person" to include an individual, trust, estate, partnership, or corporation. Arguments that an individual is not a "person" within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code have been uniformly rejected. A similar argument with respect to the term "individual" has also been rejected.

Relevant Case Law:

United States v. Karlin, 785 F.2d 90, 91 (3d Cir. 1986), cert. denied, 480 U.S. 907 (1987) – the court affirmed Karlin's conviction for failure to file income tax returns and rejected his contention that he was "not a 'person' within meaning of 26 U.S.C. § 7203" as "frivolous and requir[ing] no discussion."

McCoy v. Internal Revenue Service, 88 A.F.T.R.2d (RIA) 5909, 2001 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 15113, at *21, 22 (D. Col. Aug. 7, 2001) – the court dismissed the taxpayer's complaint, which asserted that McCoy was a nonresident alien and not subject to tax, describing the taxpayer's argument as "specious and legally frivolous."

United States v. Rhodes, 921 F. Supp. 261, 264 (M.D. Pa. 1996) – the court stated that "[a]n individual is a person under the Internal Revenue Code."

Biermann v. Commissioner, 769 F.2d 707, 708 (11th Cir.), reh'g denied, 775 F.2d 304 (11th Cir. 1985) – the court said the claim that Biermann was not "a person liable for taxes" was "patently frivolous" and, given the Tax Court's warning to Biermann that his positions would never be sustained in any court, awarded the government double costs, plus attorney's fees.

Smith v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2000-290, 80 T.C.M. (CCH) 377, 378-89 (2000) – the court described the argument that Smith "is not a 'person liable' for tax" as frivolous, sustained failure to file penalties, and imposed a penalty for maintaining "frivolous and groundless positions."

United States v. Studley, 783 F.2d 934, 937 n.3 (9th Cir. 1986) – the court affirmed a failure to file conviction, rejecting the taxpayer's contention that she was not subject to federal tax laws because she was "an absolute, freeborn, and natural individual" and went on to note that "this argument has been consistently and thoroughly rejected by every branch of the government for decades."

D. Contention: The only "employees" subject to federal income tax are employees of the federal government.

Some argue that the federal government can tax only employees of the federal government; therefore, employees in the private sector are immune from federal income tax liability. This argument is based on an apparent misinterpretation of section 3401, which imposes responsibilities to withhold tax from "wages." That section establishes the general rule that "wages" include all remuneration for services performed by an employee for his employer. Section 3401(c) goes on to state that the term "employee" includes "an officer, employee, or elected official of the United States, a State, or any political subdivision thereof . . . ."

The Law: Section 3401(c) defines "employee" and states that the term "includes an officer, employee or elected official of the United States . . . ." This language does not address how other employees' wages are subject to withholding or taxation. Section 7701(c) states that the use of the word "includes" "shall not be deemed to exclude other things otherwise within the meaning of the term defined." Thus, the word "includes" as used in the definition of "employee" is a term of enlargement, not of limitation. It clearly makes federal employees and officials a part of the definition of "employee," which generally includes private citizens.

Relevant Case Law:

United States v. Latham, 754 F.2d 747, 750 (7th Cir. 1985) – calling the instructions Latham wanted given to the jury "inane," the court said, "[the] instruction which indicated that under 26 U.S.C. § 3401(c) the category of 'employee' does not include privately employed wage earners is a preposterous reading of the statute. It is obvious within the context of [the law] the word 'includes' is a term of enlargement not of limitation, and the reference to certain entities or categories is not intended to exclude all others. "

Sullivan v. United States, 788 F.2d 813, 815 (1st Cir. 1986) – the court rejected Sullivan's attempt to recover a civil penalty for filing a frivolous return, stating "to the extent [he] argues that he received no 'wages' . . . because he was not an 'employee' within the meaning of 26 U.S.C. § 3401(c), that contention is meritless. . . . The statute does not purport to limit withholding to the persons listed therein." The court imposed sanctions on Sullivan for bringing a frivolous appeal.

Peth v. Breitzmann, 611 F. Supp. 50, 53 (E.D. Wis. 1985) – the court rejected the taxpayer's argument "that he is not an 'employee' under I.R.C. § 3401(c) because he is not a federal officer, employee, elected official, or

corporate officer," stating, "[he] mistakenly assumes that this definition of 'employee' excludes all other wage earners."

Pabon v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1994-476, 68 T.C.M. (CCH) 813, 816 (1994) – the court characterized Pabon's position – including that she was not subject to tax because she was not an employee of the federal or state governments – as "nothing but tax protester rhetoric and legalistic gibberish." The court imposed a penalty of $2,500 on Pabon for bringing a frivolous case, stating that she "regards this case as a vehicle to protest the tax laws of this country and espouse her own misguided views."

IV. Constitutional Amendment Claims

A. Contention: Taxpayers can refuse to pay income taxes on religious or moral grounds by invoking the First Amendment

Some argue that taxpayers may refuse to pay federal income taxes based on their religious or moral beliefs, or objection to the use of taxes to fund certain government programs. These persons mistakenly invoke the First Amendment in support of this frivolous position.

The Law: The First Amendment to the United States Constitution provides, in part, that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . ." The First Amendment, however, does not provide a right to refuse to pay income taxes on religious or moral grounds, or because taxes are used to fund government programs opposed by the taxpayer.

United States v. Lee, 455 U.S. 252, 260 (1982) – the U.S. Supreme Court held that the broad public interest in maintaining a sound tax system is of such importance that religious beliefs in conflict with the payment of taxes provide no basis for refusing to pay, and stated that "[t]he tax system could not function if denominations were allowed to challenge the tax system because tax payments were spent in a manner that violates their religious belief."

United States v. Ramsey, 992 F.2d 831, 833 (8th Cir. 1993) – the court rejected Ramsey's argument that filing federal income tax returns and paying federal income taxes violates his pacifist religious beliefs and stated that Ramsey "has no First Amendment right to avoid federal income taxes on religious grounds."

Wall v. United States, 756 F.2d 52 (8th Cir. 1985) – the court upheld the imposition of a $500 frivolous return penalty against Wall for taking a "war tax deduction" on his federal income tax return based on his religious convictions and stated the "necessities of revenue collection through a sound tax system raise governmental interests sufficiently compelling to outweigh the free exercise rights of those who find the tax objectionable on bona fide religious grounds."

B. Contention: Federal income taxes constitute a "taking" of property without due process of law, violating the Fifth Amendment.

Some assert that the collection of federal income taxes constitutes a "taking" of property without due process of law, in violation of the Fifth Amendment. Thus, any attempt by the Internal Revenue Service to collect federal income taxes owed by a taxpayer is unconstitutional.

The Law: The Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides that a person shall not be "deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law . . . ." The U.S. Supreme Court stated in Brushaber v. Union Pacific R.R., 240 U.S. 1, 24 (1916), that "it is . . . well settled that [the Fifth Amendment] is not a limitation upon the taxing power conferred upon Congress by the Constitution; in other words, that the Constitution does not conflict with itself by conferring upon the one hand a taxing power, and taking the same power away on the other by limitations of the due process clause." Further, the Supreme Court has upheld the constitutionality of the summary administrative procedures contained in the Internal Revenue Code against due process challenges, on the basis that a post-collection remedy (e.g., a tax refund suit) exists and is sufficient to satisfy the requirements of constitutional due process. Phillips v. Commissioner, 283 U.S. 589, 595-97 (1931).

The Internal Revenue Code provides methods to ensure due process to taxpayers: (1) the "refund method," set forth in section 7422(e) and 28 U.S.C. §§ 1341 and 1346(a), where a taxpayer must pay the full amount of the tax and then sue in a federal district court or in the United States Court of Federal Claims for a refund; and (2) the "deficiency method," set forth in section 6213(a), where a taxpayer may, without paying the contested tax, petition the United States Tax Court to redetermine a tax deficiency asserted by the IRS. Courts have found that both methods provide constitutional due process.

In recent years, Congress passed new laws providing further protection for taxpayers' due process rights in collection matters. In the Internal Revenue

Service Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-206, § 3401, 112 Stat. 685, 746, Congress enacted new sections 6320 (pertaining to liens) and 6330 (pertaining to levies) establishing collection due process rights for taxpayers, effective for collection actions after January 19, 1999. Generally, the IRS must provide taxpayers notice and an opportunity for an administrative appeals hearing upon the filing of a notice of federal tax lien (section 6320) and prior to levy (section 6330). Taxpayers also have the right to seek judicial review of the IRS's determination in these due process proceedings. I.R.C. § 6330(d). These reviews can extend to the merits of the underlying tax liability, if the taxpayer has not previously received the opportunity for review of the merits, e.g., did not receive a notice of deficiency. I.R.C. § 6330(c)(2)(B). However, the Tax Court has indicated that it will impose sanctions pursuant to section 6673 against taxpayers who seek judicial relief based upon frivolous or groundless positions.

Relevant Case Law:

Flora v. United States, 362 U.S. 145, 175 (1960) – the court held that a taxpayer must pay the full tax assessment before being able to file a refund suit in district court, noting that a person has the right to appeal an assessment to the Tax Court "without paying a cent."

Schiff v. United States, 919 F.2d 830 (2d Cir. 1990) – the court rejected a due process claim where the taxpayer chose not to avail himself of the opportunity to appeal a deficiency notice to the Tax Court.

Goza v. Commissioner, 114 T.C. 176 (2000) – the court rejected the taxpayer's attempt to use the judicial review process as a forum to contest the underlying tax liability, since the taxpayer had an opportunity to dispute that liability after receiving the statutory notice of deficiency.

Pierson v. Commissioner, 115 T.C. 576, 581 (2000) – the court considered imposing sanctions against the taxpayer, but decided against doing so, stating, "we regard this case as fair warning to those taxpayers who, in the future, institute or maintain a lien or levy action primarily for delay or whose position in such a proceeding is frivolous or groundless."

Davis v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2001-87, 81 T.C.M. (CCH) 1503 (2001) – the court imposed a $4,000 penalty for frivolous and groundless arguments, after warning that the taxpayer could be penalized for presenting them.

Roberts v. Commissioner, 118 T.C. 365, 372-73 (2002) – the court imposed a $10,000 penalty against Roberts for making frivolous arguments stating "[i]n Pierson v. Commissioner . . . we issued an unequivocal warning to taxpayers concerning the imposition of a penalty under section 6673(a) on those taxpayers who abuse the protections afforded by sections 6320 and 6330 by instituting or maintaining actions under those sections primarily for delay or by taking frivolous or groundless positions in such actions."

C. Contention: Taxpayers do not have to file returns or provide financial information because of the protection against self-incrimination found in the Fifth Amendment.

Some argue that taxpayers may refuse to file federal income tax returns, or may submit tax returns on which they refuse to provide any financial information, because they believe that their Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination will be violated.

The Law: There is no constitutional right to refuse to file an income tax return on the ground that it violates the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination. In United States v. Sullivan, 274 U.S. 259, 264 (1927), the U.S. Supreme Court stated that the taxpayer "could not draw a conjurer's circle around the whole matter by his own declaration that to write any word upon the government blank would bring him into danger of the law." The failure to comply with the filing and reporting requirements of the federal tax laws will not be excused based upon blanket assertions of the constitutional privilege against compelled self-incrimination under the Fifth Amendment.

Relevant Case Law:

United States v. Schiff, 612 F.2d 73, 83 (2d Cir. 1979) – the court said that "the Fifth Amendment privilege does not immunize all witnesses from testifying. Only those who assert as to each particular question that the answer to that question would tend to incriminate them are protected . . . . [T]he questions in the income tax return are neutral on their face . . . [h]ence privilege may not be claimed against all disclosure on an income tax return."

United States v. Brown, 600 F.2d 248, 252 (10th Cir. 1979) – noting that the Supreme Court had established "that the self-incrimination privilege can be employed to protect the taxpayer from revealing the information as to an illegal source of income, but does not protect him from disclosing the amount of his income," the court said Brown made "an illegal effort to

stretch the Fifth Amendment to include a taxpayer who wishes to avoid filing a return."

United States v. Neff, 615 F.2d 1235, 1241 (9th Cir.), cert. denied, 447 U.S. 925 (1980) – the court affirmed a failure to file conviction, noting that the taxpayer "did not show that his response to the tax form questions would have been self-incriminating. He cannot, therefore, prevail on his Fifth Amendment claim."

United States v. Daly, 481 F.2d 28, 30 (8th Cir.), cert. denied, 414 U.S. 1064 (1973) – the court affirmed a failure to file conviction, rejecting the taxpayer's Fifth Amendment claim because of his "error in . . . his blanket refusal to answer any questions on the returns relating to his income or expenses."

Sochia v. Commissioner, 23 F.3d 941 (5th Cir. 1994), cert. denied, 513 U.S. 1153 (1995) – the court affirmed tax assessments and penalties for failure to file returns, failure to pay taxes, and filing a frivolous return. The court also imposed sanctions for pursuing a frivolous case. The taxpayers had failed to provide any information on their tax return about income and expenses, instead claiming a Fifth Amendment privilege on each line calling for financial information.

D. Contention: Compelled compliance with the federal income tax laws is a form of servitude in violation of the Thirteenth Amendment.

This argument asserts that the compelled compliance with federal tax laws is a form of servitude in violation of the Thirteenth Amendment.

The Law: The Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution prohibits slavery within the United States, as well as the imposition of involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime of which a person shall have been duly convicted. In Porth v. Brodrick, 214 F.2d 925, 926 (10th Cir. 1954), the Court of Appeals stated that "if the requirements of the tax laws were to be classed as servitude, they would not be the kind of involuntary servitude referred to in the Thirteenth Amendment." Courts have consistently found arguments that taxation constitutes a form of involuntary servitude to be frivolous.

Relevant Case Law:

Porth v. Brodrick, 214 F.2d 925, 926 (10th Cir. 1954) – the court described the taxpayer's Thirteenth and Sixteenth Amendment claims as "clearly unsubstantial and without merit," as well as "far-fetched and frivolous."

United States v. Drefke, 707 F.2d 978, 983 (8th Cir. 1983) – the court affirmed Drefke's failure to file conviction, rejecting his claim that the Thirteenth Amendment prohibited his imprisonment because that amendment "is inapplicable where involuntary servitude is imposed as punishment for a crime."

Ginter v. Southern, 611 F.2d 1226 (8th Cir. 1979) – the court rejected the taxpayer's claim that the Internal Revenue Code results in involuntary servitude in violation of the Thirteenth Amendment.

Kasey v. Commissioner, 457 F.2d 369 (9th Cir. 1972) – the court rejected as without merit the argument that the requirements to keep records and to prepare and file tax returns violated the Kaseys' Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination and amount to involuntary servitude prohibited by the Thirteenth Amendment.

Wilbert v. Internal Revenue Service (In re Wilbert), 262 B.R. 571, 578, 88 A.F.T.R.2d 6650 (Bankr. N.D. Ga. 2001) – the court rejected the taxpayer's argument that taxation is a form of involuntary servitude prohibited by the Thirteenth Amendment, stating that "[i]t is well-settled American jurisprudence that constitutional challenges to the IRS' authority to collect individual income taxes have no legal merit and are 'patently frivolous.'"

E. Contention: The Sixteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution was not properly ratified, thus the federal income tax laws are unconstitutional.

This argument is based on the premise that all federal income tax laws are unconstitutional because the Sixteenth Amendment was not officially ratified, or because the State of Ohio was not properly a state at the time of ratification. This argument has survived over time because proponents mistakenly believe that the courts have refused to address this issue.

The Law: The Sixteenth Amendment provides that Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes on income, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several states, and without regard to any census or enumeration. U.S. Const. amend. XVI. The Sixteenth Amendment was ratified by forty states, including Ohio, and issued by proclamation in 1913. Shortly thereafter, two other states also ratified the

Amendment. Under Article V of the Constitution, only three-fourths of the states are needed to ratify an Amendment. There were enough states ratifying the Sixteenth Amendment even without Ohio to complete the number needed for ratification. Furthermore, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the income tax laws enacted subsequent to ratification of the Sixteenth Amendment in Brushaber v. Union Pacific R.R., 240 U.S. 1 (1916). Since that time, the courts have consistently upheld the constitutionality of the federal income tax.

Relevant Case Law:

Miller v. United States, 868 F.2d 236, 241 (7th Cir. 1989) (per curiam) – the court stated, "We find it hard to understand why the long and unbroken line of cases upholding the constitutionality of the sixteenth amendment generally, Brushaber v. Union Pacific Railroad Company . . . and those specifically rejecting the argument advanced in The Law That Never Was, have not persuaded Miller and his compatriots to seek a more effective forum for airing their attack on the federal income tax structure." The court imposed sanctions on them for having advanced a "patently frivolous" position.

United States v. Stahl, 792 F.2d 1438, 1441 (9th Cir. 1986), cert. denied, 479 U.S. 1036 (1987) – stating that "the Secretary of State's certification under authority of Congress that the sixteenth amendment has been ratified by the requisite number of states and has become part of the Constitution is conclusive upon the courts," the court upheld Stahl's conviction for failure to file returns and for making a false statement.

Knoblauch v. Commissioner, 749 F.2d 200, 201 (5th Cir. 1984), cert. denied, 474 U.S. 830 (1986) – the court rejected the contention that the Sixteenth Amendment was not constitutionally adopted as "totally without merit" and imposed monetary sanctions against Knoblauch based on the frivolousness of his appeal. "Every court that has considered this argument has rejected it," the court observed.

United States v. Foster, 789 F.2d 457 (7th Cir.), cert. denied, 479 U.S. 883 (1986) – the court affirmed Foster's conviction for tax evasion, failing to file a return, and filing a false W-4 statement, rejecting his claim that the Sixteenth Amendment was never properly ratified.

F. Contention: The Sixteenth Amendment does not authorize a direct non-apportioned federal income tax on United States citizens.

Some assert that the Sixteenth Amendment does not authorize a direct non-apportioned income tax and thus, U.S. citizens and residents are not subject to federal income tax laws.

The Law: The courts have both implicitly and explicitly recognized that the Sixteenth Amendment authorizes a non-apportioned direct income tax on United States citizens and that the federal tax laws as applied are valid. In United States v. Collins, 920 F.2d 619, 629 (10th Cir. 1990), cert. denied, 500 U.S. 920 (1991), the court cited to Brushaber v. Union Pac. R.R., 240 U.S. 1, 12-19 (1916), and noted that the U.S. Supreme Court has recognized that the "sixteenth amendment authorizes a direct nonapportioned tax upon United States citizens throughout the nation."

Relevant Case Law:

In re Becraft, 885 F.2d 547 (9th Cir. 1989) – the court affirmed a failure to file conviction, rejecting the taxpayer's frivolous position that the Sixteenth Amendment does not authorize a direct non-apportioned income tax.

Lovell v. United States, 755 F.2d 517, 518 (7th Cir. 1984) – the court rejected the argument that the Constitution prohibits imposition of a direct tax without apportionment, and upheld the district court's frivolous return penalty assessment and the award of attorneys' fees to the government "because [the taxpayers'] legal position was patently frivolous." The appeals court imposed additional sanctions for pursuing "frivolous arguments in bad faith."

Broughton v. United States, 632 F.2d 706 (8th Cir. 1980) – the court rejected a refund suit, stating that the Sixteenth Amendment authorizes imposition of an income tax without apportionment among the states.

V. Fictional Legal Bases

A. Contention: The Internal Revenue Service is not an agency of the United States.

Some argue that the Internal Revenue Service is not an agency of the United States but rather a private corporation, because it was not created by positive law (i.e., an act of Congress) and that, therefore, the IRS does not have the authority to enforce the Internal Revenue Code.

The Law: There is a host of constitutional and statutory authority establishing that the Internal Revenue Service is an agency of the United States. The U.S. Supreme Court stated in Donaldson v. United States, 400

U.S. 517, 534 (1971), "[w]e bear in mind that the Internal Revenue Service is organized to carry out the broad responsibilities of the Secretary of the Treasury under § 7801(a) of the 1954 Code for the administration and enforcement of the internal revenue laws."

Pursuant to section 7801, the Secretary of Treasury has full authority to administer and enforce the internal revenue laws and has the power to create an agency to enforce such laws. Based upon this legislative grant, the Internal Revenue Service was created. Thus, the Internal Revenue Service is a body established by "positive law" because it was created through a congressionally mandated power. Moreover, section 7803(a) explicitly provides that there shall be a Commissioner of Internal Revenue who shall administer and supervise the execution and application of the internal revenue laws.

Relevant Case Law:

Salman v. Dept. of Treasury, 899 F. Supp. 471 (D. Nev. 1995) – the court described Salman's contention that the Internal Revenue Service is not a government agency of the United States as wholly frivolous and dismissed his claim with prejudice.

Young v. I.R.S., 596 F. Supp. 141 (N.D. Ind. 1984) – the court granted summary judgment in favor of the government, rejecting Young's claim that the Internal Revenue Service is a private corporation, rather than a government agency.

B. Contention: Taxpayers are not required to file a federal income tax return, because the instructions and regulations associated with the Form 1040 do not display an OMB control number as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act.

Some argue that taxpayers are not required to file tax returns because of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, 44 U.S.C. § 3501, et seq. ("PRA"). The PRA was enacted to limit federal agencies' information requests that burden the public. The "public protection" provision of the PRA provides that no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to maintain or provide information to any agency if the information collection request involved does not display a current control number assigned by the Office of Management and Budget [OMB] Director. 44 U.S.C. § 3512. Advocates of this contention claim that they cannot be penalized for failing to file Form 1040, because the instructions and regulations associated with the Form 1040 do not display any OMB control number.

The Law: The courts have uniformly rejected this argument on different grounds. Some courts have simply noted that the PRA applies to the forms themselves, not to the instruction booklets, and because the Form 1040 does have a control number, there is no PRA violation.

Other courts have held that Congress created the duty to file returns in section 6012(a) and "Congress did not enact the PRA's public protection provision to allow OMB to abrogate any duty imposed by Congress." United States v. Neff, 954 F.2d 698, 699 (11th Cir. 1992).

Relevant Case Law:

United States v. Wunder, 919 F.2d 34 (6th Cir. 1990) – the court rejected Wunder's claim of a PRA violation, affirming his conviction for failing to file a return.

Salberg v. United States, 969 F.2d 379 (7th Cir. 1992) – the court affirmed Salberg's conviction for tax evasion and failing to file a return, rejecting his claims under the PRA.

United States v. Holden, 963 F.2d 1114 (8th Cir.), cert. denied, 506 U.S. 958 (1992) – the court affirmed Holden's conviction for failing to file a return and rejected his contention that he should have been acquitted because tax instruction booklets fail to comply with the PRA.

United States v. Hicks, 947 F.2d 1356, 1359 (9th Cir. 1991) – the court affirmed Hicks' conviction for failing to file a return, finding that the requirement to provide information is required by law, not by the IRS. "This is a legislative command, not an administrative request. The PRA was not meant to provide criminals with an all-purpose escape hatch."

Lonsdale v. United States, 919 F.2d 1440, 1445 (10th Cir. 1990) – the court found that the PRA "is inapplicable to 'information collection request' forms issued during an investigation against an individual to determine his or her tax liability."

C. Contention: African Americans can claim a special tax credit as reparations for slavery and other oppressive treatment.

Proponents of this contention assert that African Americans can claim a so-called "Black Tax Credit" on their federal income tax returns as reparations for slavery and other oppressive treatment suffered by African Americans. A similar frivolous argument has been made that Native Americans are

entitled to a credit on their federal income tax returns as a form of reparations for past oppressive treatment.

The Law: There is no provision in the Internal Revenue Code which allows taxpayers to claim a "Black Tax Credit" or a credit for Native American reparations. It is a well settled principle of law that deductions and credits are a matter of legislative grace. See e.g., Wilson v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2001-139, 81 T.C.M. (CCH) 1745 (2001). Unless specifically provided for in the Internal Revenue Code, no deduction or credit may be allowed.

The IRS indicated in News Release IR-2002-08, 2002 I.R.B. LEXIS 30, that it will crack down on promoters of "slavery reparation tax credit" and "Native American reparations" scams. See 2002 TNT 17-15 (January 24, 2002). Also, according to the News Release, the IRS will implement a new policy under which these reparation claims will be treated as a frivolous tax return which could result in a potential $500 penalty. Id.

Furthermore, the United States has a cause of action for injunctive relief against a party suspected of violating the tax laws. Sections 7407 and 7408 provide for injunctive relief against income tax preparers and promoters of abusive tax shelters, respectively, in these types of cases. For example, on March 6, 2002, the United States filed a civil suit to enjoin a tax return preparer (Andrew W. Wiley) from preparing federal income tax returns claiming refunds based on a non-existent tax credit for slavery reparations. United States v. Wiley, No. 3:02-cv-209WS (S.D. Miss. 2002).

Relevant Case Law:

United States v. Bridges, 86 A.F.T.R.2d (RIA) 5280 (4th Cir. 2000) – the court upheld Bridges' conviction of aiding and assisting the preparation of false tax returns, on which he claimed a non-existent "Black Tax Credit."

United States v. Haugabook, 2002 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 25314 (M.D. Ga. 2002) – the court entered a permanent injunction against Haugabook prohibiting him from preparing returns or other documents to be filed with the IRS claiming a tax credit or refund for reparations for slavery or other fabricated tax credits or refunds.

United States v. Mims, 2002 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 25291 (S.D. Ga. 2002) – the court entered a permanent injunction against the defendants prohibiting them from preparing returns or other documents with the IRS claiming a

credit or refund for reparations for slavery or any other fabricated tax credit or refund.

United States v. Foster, 2002-2 U.S.T.C. (CCH) ¶ 50,785 (E.D. Va. 2002) – the court held that no provision of the Internal Revenue Code allows for a tax credit for slavery reparations and entered an injunction against Foster (an income tax return preparer) prohibiting him from preparing returns or refund claims based on fabricated tax credits.

D. Contention: Taxpayers are entitled to a refund of the Social Security taxes paid over their lifetime.

Proponents of this contention encourage individuals to file claims for refund of the Social Security taxes paid during their lifetime, on the basis that the claimants have sought to waive all rights to their Social Security benefits. Additionally, some advise taxpayers to claim a charitable contribution deduction as a result of their "gift" of these benefits or of the Social Security taxes to the United States.

The Law: There is no provision in the Internal Revenue Code, or any other provision of law, which allows for a refund of Social Security taxes paid on the grounds asserted above. In Crouch v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1990-309, 59 T.C.M. (CCH) 938 (1990), the Tax Court sustained an IRS determination that a person may not claim a charitable contribution deduction based upon the waiver of future Social Security benefits.

VI. "Untaxing" Packages or "Untaxing" Trusts

A. Contention: An "untaxing" package or trust provides a way of legally and permanently avoiding the obligation to file federal income tax returns and pay federal income taxes.

Advocates of this idea believe that an "untaxing" package or trust provides a way of legally and permanently "untaxing" oneself so that a person would no longer be required to file federal income tax returns and pay federal income taxes. Promoters who sell such tax evasion plans and supposedly teach individuals how to remove themselves from the federal tax system rely on many of the above-described frivolous arguments, such as the claim that payment of federal income taxes is voluntary, that there is no requirement

for a person to file federal income tax returns, and that there are legal ways not to pay federal income taxes.

The Law: The underlying claims for these "untaxing" packages are frivolous, as specified above. Promoters of these "untaxing" schemes as well as willful taxpayers have been subjected to criminal penalties for their actions. Taxpayers who have purchased and followed these "untaxing" plans have also been subjected to civil penalties for failure to timely file a federal income tax return and failure to pay federal income taxes.

Furthermore, section 7408 provides a cause of action for injunctive relief to the United States against a party suspected of violating the tax laws. On November 15, 2001, the United States filed complaints for permanent injunctions pursuant to section 7408 against three individuals (David Bosset, Thurston Bell, and Harold Hearn) for failing to sign tax returns, promoting schemes that they knew were false or fraudulent, and engaging in the preparation of documents that understate tax liability. United States v. Bosset, No. 8:01-cv-2154-T-26TBM (M.D. Fla. 2001); United States v. Bell, No. 1:CV-01-2159 (M.D. Penn. 2001); United States v. Hearn, No. 1:01-CV-3058 (N.D. Ga. 2001).

On January 29, 2002, a consent order was entered in United States v. Hearn in favor of the United States that permanently enjoined Mr. Hearn and his representatives from, among other things, promoting or selling tax shelter plans (including but not limited to the § 861 argument). In the order, Mr. Hearn agreed that he relied upon the frivolous § 861 argument in making false or fraudulent statements on federal income tax returns regarding the excludibility of wages and other items from income. Preliminary injunction orders were entered in United States v. Bosset (order entered on March 26, 2002) and United States v. Bell (order entered on January 10, 2003) enjoining Mr. Bosset and Mr. Bell, respectively, from promoting frivolous positions for fraudulent tax schemes.

Relevant Case Law:

United States v. Andra, 218 F.3d 1106 (9th Cir. 2000) – in affirming the conviction of a promoter of an untaxing scheme for tax evasion and conspiracy, the court found that it was proper to include the tax liabilities of persons Andra recruited into a tax fraud conspiracy when calculating the effect of his actions for sentencing.

United States v. Clark, 139 F.3d 485 (5th Cir.), cert. denied, 525 U.S. 899 (1998) – the court upheld convictions of defendants involved with The Pilot

Connection Society for conspiracy to defraud the United States and aiding and abetting the filing of fraudulent Forms W-4.

Robinson v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1995-102, 69 T.C.M. (CCH) 2061, 2062 (1995) – the court quoted language from Hanson v. Commissioner, 696 F.2d 1232, 1234 (9th Cir. 1983) that "[n]o reasonable person would have trusted this scheme to work."

King v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 1995-524, 70 T.C.M. (CCH) 1152 (1995) – the court found King, who had followed the Pilot Connection's "untaxing" techniques, liable for penalties for failure to file returns and for failing to make sufficient estimated tax payments.

United States v. Raymond, 228 F.3d 804, 812 (7th Cir. 2000), cert. denied, 121 S. Ct. 2242 (2001) – the court affirmed a permanent injunction against taxpayers who promoted a "De-Taxing America Program," forbidding them from engaging in certain activities that incited others to violate tax laws. The court said, "[W]e conclude that the statements the appellants made in the Just Say No advertisement were representations concerning the tax benefits of purchasing and following the De-Taxing America Program that the appellants reasonably should have known were false."

United States v. Kaun, 827 F.2d 1144 (7th Cir. 1987) – the court affirmed the district court's injunction prohibiting the taxpayer from inciting others to submit tax returns based on false income tax theories.

United States v. Krall, 835 F.2d 711 (8th Cir. 1987) – the court held that the trusts used were shams. The defendant, an optometrist, exercised the same dominion and control over the corpus and income of the trusts as he had before the trusts were executed. The court further found the defendant illegally attempted to assign his earned income to the various trusts.

United States v. Scott, 37 F.3d 1564 (10th Cir. 1994) – the court concluded the true grantor of the trusts was in substance the purchaser, who was also the trustee, as well as the beneficiary. It was as if there were no transfers at all. Therefore the purchaser was subject to tax on all the income of the various trusts. The defendants were the promoters of a multi-tiered trust package marketed to purchasers as a device to eliminate tax liability without losing control over their assets or income.

PENALTIES FOR PURSUING FRIVOLOUS TAX ARGUMENTS

Those who act on frivolous positions risk a variety of civil and criminal penalties. Those who adopt these positions may face harsher consequences than those who merely promote them. As the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals noted in United States v. Sloan, 939 F.2d 499, 499-500 (7th Cir. 1991), "Like moths to a flame, some people find themselves irresistibly drawn to the tax protestor movement's illusory claim that there is no legal requirement to pay federal income tax. And, like moths, these people sometimes get burned."

Taxpayers filing returns with frivolous positions may be subject to the accuracy-related penalty under section 6662 (twenty percent of the underpayment attributable to negligence or disregard of rules or regulations) or the civil fraud penalty under section 6663 (seventy-five percent of the underpayment attributable to fraud). Tax preparers who submit returns maintaining groundless positions may be subject to penalties in addition to those imposed on their clients.

Moreover, section 6702 provides for the imposition of a $500 penalty against any individual who files a frivolous income tax return. The legislative history underlying this section states, "the Committee is concerned with the rapid growth of deliberate defiance of the tax laws by tax protesters. The Committee believes that an immediately assessable penalty on the filing of protest returns will help deter the filing of such returns." S. Rep. No. 494, 97th Cong., 2d Sess. 277, reprinted in 1982 U.S.C.C.A.N. 781, 1023-24.

In the 1980s, Congress showed its concern about taxpayers misusing the courts and obstructing the appeal rights of others when it enacted tougher sanctions for bringing frivolous cases before the courts. Section 6673 allows the courts to impose a penalty of up to $25,000 when they come to any of three conclusions:

- a taxpayer instituted a proceeding primarily for delay,
- a position is frivolous or groundless, or
- a taxpayer unreasonably failed to pursue administrative remedies.

An appeals court explained the rationale for the sanctions in Coleman v. Commissioner, 791 F.2d 68, 72 (7th Cir. 1986): "The purpose of § 6673 . . . is to induce litigants to conform their *behavior* to the governing rules regardless of their subjective beliefs. Groundless litigation diverts the time and energies of judges from more serious claims; it imposes needless costs on other litigants. Once the legal system has resolved a claim, judges and lawyers must move on to other things. They cannot endlessly rehear stale arguments . . . . [T]here is no constitutional right to bring frivolous suits . . . . People who wish to express displeasure with taxes must choose other forums, and there are many available."

Relevant Case Law:

Jones v. Commissioner, 688 F.2d 17 (6th Cir. 1982) – the court found the taxpayer's claim that his wages were paid in "depreciated bank notes" as clearly without merit and affirmed the Tax Court's imposition of an addition to tax for negligence or intentional disregard of rules and regulations.

Baskin v. United States, 738 F.2d 975 (8th Cir. 1984) – the court found that the IRS's assessment of a frivolous return penalty without a judicial hearing was not a denial of due process, since there was an adequate opportunity for a later judicial determination of legal rights.

Holker v. United States, 737 F.2d 751, 752-53 (8th Cir. 1984) – the court upheld the frivolous return penalty even though the taxpayer claimed the documents he filed to claim a refund did not constitute a tax return. Noting that "[t]axpayers may not obtain refunds without first filing returns," the court then found that "[h]is unexplained designation of his W-2 forms as 'INCORRECT' and his attempt to deduct his wages as the cost of labor on Schedule C also establish the frivolousness and incorrectness of his position."

Rowe v. United States, 583 F. Supp. 1516, 1520 (D. Del. 1984) – the court upheld section 6702 against various objections, including that it was unconstitutionally vague because it does not define a "frivolous" return. "Frivolous is commonly understood to mean having no basis in law or fact," the court stated.

Gass v. United States, 2001-1 U.S.T.C. (CCH) ¶ 50,220 (10th Cir. 2001) – the court imposed an $8,000 penalty for contending that taxes on income from real property are unconstitutional. The court had earlier penalized the taxpayers $2,000 for advancing the same arguments in another case.

Brashier v. Commissioner, 2001-1 U.S.T.C. (CCH) ¶ 50,356 (10th Cir. 2001) – the court imposed $1,000 penalties on taxpayers who argued that filing sworn income tax returns violated their Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination, after the Tax Court had warned them that their argument – rejected consistently for more than seventy years – was frivolous.

McAfee v. United States, 2001-1 U.S.T.C. (CCH) ¶ 50,433 (N.D. Ga. 2001) – after losing the argument that his wages were not income and receiving a $500 penalty, the taxpayer returned to court to try to stop the government from collecting that penalty by garnishing his wages. The court stated that "bringing this ill-considered, nonsensical litigation before this court for yet a second time is nothing but contumacious foolishness which wastes the time and energy of the court system," and imposed a $1,000 penalty.

United States v. Rempel, 87 A.F.T.R.2d (RIA) 1810 (D. Ak. 2001) – the court warned the taxpayers of sanctions and stated: "It is apparent to the court from some of the papers filed by the Rempels that they have at least had access to some of the publications of tax protester organizations. The publications of these organizations have a bad habit of giving lots of advice without explaining the consequences which can flow from the assertion of totally discredited legal positions and/or meritless factual positions."

Cases from United States Tax Court 2000-2003

Nunn v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-250, 84 T.C.M. (CCH) 403, 410 (2002) – the court, on its own motion, imposed sanctions against the taxpayers in the amount of $7,500 after warning taxpayers repeatedly that their frivolous arguments could subject them to a penalty stating "[w]here pro se litigants are warned that their claims are frivolous . . . and where they are aware of the ample legal authority holding squarely against them, a penalty is appropriate."

Sawukaytis v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-156, 83 T.C.M. (CCH) 1886, 1888 (2002) – the court imposed a $12,500 penalty against the taxpayer for arguing the income tax is an excise tax and that he did not engage in excise taxable activities. The court found the taxpayer's "position, based on stale and meritless contentions, is manifestly frivolous and groundless."

Ward v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-147, 83 T.C.M. (CCH) 1820, 1824 (2002) – the court imposed sanctions against the Wards in the amount of $25,000 stating that "[t]heir insistence on making frivolous protester type arguments indicates an unwillingness to respect the tax laws of the United States."

Gill v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-146, 83 T.C.M. (CCH) 1816, 1819 (2002) – the court imposed a $7,500 penalty against the taxpayer stating the taxpayer's "insistence on making frivolous protester type arguments indicates an unwillingness to respect the tax laws of the United States."

Monaghan v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-16, 83 T.C.M. (CCH) 1102, 1104 (2002) – the court rejected the taxpayer's frivolous arguments and imposed sanctions in the amount of $1,500, stating that "[h]e has caused this Court to waste its limited resources on his erroneous views of the tax law which he should have known are completely without merit."

Hart v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2001-306, 82 T.C.M. (CCH) 934 (2001) – the court imposed sanctions in the amount of $15,000 against the taxpayer, because his delaying actions caused the Service and the court to needlessly spend time preparing for the trial and writing the opinion.

Sigerseth v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo 2001-148, 81 T.C.M. (CCH) 1792, 1794 (2001) – pointing out that this case involving the use of trusts to avoid taxes was "a waste of limited judicial and administrative resources that could have been devoted to resolving bona fide claims of other taxpayers," the court imposed a $15,000 penalty.

MatrixInfoSys Trust v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2001-133, 81 T.C.M. (CCH) 1726, 1729 (2001) – in claiming that his income belonged to his trust, the court stated that the taxpayer had made "shopworn arguments characteristic of the tax-protester rhetoric that has been universally rejected by this and other courts," and imposed a $12,500 penalty.

Madge v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2000-370, 80 T.C.M. (CCH) 804 (2000) – after having warned the taxpayer that continuing with his frivolous arguments – that he was not a taxpayer, that his income was not taxable, and that only foreign income was taxable – would likely result in a penalty, the court imposed the maximum $25,000 penalty.

Haines v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2000-126, 79 T.C.M. (CCH) 1844, 1846 (2000) – stating, "[p]etitioner knew or should have known that his position was groundless and frivolous, yet he persisted in maintaining this proceeding primarily to impede the proper workings of our judicial system and to delay the payment of his Federal income tax liabilities," the court imposed a $25,000 penalty.

Pierson v. Commissioner, 115 T.C. 576, 581 (2000) – the court considered imposing sanctions against the taxpayer, but decided against doing so, stating, "we regard this case as fair warning to those taxpayers who, in the future, institute or maintain a lien or levy action primarily for delay or whose position in such a proceeding is frivolous or groundless."

Roberts v. Commissioner, 118 T.C. 365, 372-73 (2002) – the court imposed a $10,000 penalty against Roberts for making frivolous arguments stating "[i]n Pierson v. Commissioner . . . we issued an unequivocal warning to taxpayers concerning the imposition of a penalty under section 6673(a) on those taxpayers who abuse the protections afforded by sections 6320 and 6330 by instituting or maintaining actions under those sections primarily for delay or by taking frivolous or groundless positions in such actions."

Eiselstein v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2003-22, 85 T.C.M. (CCH) 794, 796 (2002) – the court imposed a penalty of $5,000 against the taxpayer for raising "frivolous tax-protester arguments" and referred to the "unequivocal warning" issued by the court in Pierson v. Commissioner concerning the imposition of sanctions against taxpayers abusing the protections provided for in sections 6320 and 6330.

Haines v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2003-16, 85 T.C.M. (CCH) 771, 773 (2003) – in this collection due process case, the court imposed a penalty of $2,000 against the taxpayers

for making "protester arguments which have, on numerous occasions, been rejected by the courts."

Gunselman v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2003-11, 85 T.C.M. (CCH) 756, 759 (2003) – in this collection due process case, the court imposed a penalty of $1,000 against the taxpayer who argued "that there is no Internal Revenue Code section that makes him liable for taxes." The court characterized the taxpayer's argument as a "frivolous, tax-protester argument."

Young v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2003-6, 85 T.C.M. (CCH) 739, 742 (2003) – in this collection due process case, the court imposed a penalty of $500 against the taxpayer for "raising the same arguments that [the court has] previously and consistently rejected as frivolous and groundless."

Rennie v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-296, 84 T.C.M. (CCH) 611, 614 (2002) – in this collection due process case, the court imposed a $1,500 penalty against the taxpayer for making frivolous arguments and choosing "to ignore and/or not follow case precedent and interpretation of the statutory law."

Tornichio v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-291, 84 T.C.M. (CCH) 578, 582 (2002) – the court imposed a $12,500 penalty against the taxpayer in this collection due process case for making frivolous arguments, stating "[f]ederal courts have unequivocally rejected his protester arguments and sanctioned him for raising them."

Davich v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-255, 84 T.C.M. (CCH) 429, 435 (2002) – the court imposed a $5,000 penalty against the taxpayer in this collection due process case, stating "it is clear that [the taxpayer] regards this proceeding as nothing but a vehicle to protest the tax laws of this country and to espouse his own misguided views, which we regard as frivolous and groundless."

Davidson v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-194, 84 T.C.M. (CCH) 156, 160-61 (2002) – the court imposed a $4,000 penalty for raising groundless arguments in a collection due process case noting that "[d]uring the administrative hearing, petitioner was provided with a copy of the Court's opinion in Pierson v. Commissioner [115 T.C. 576, 581 (2000)]. . . and was warned that his arguments were frivolous."

Davis v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2001-87, 81 T.C.M. (CCH) 1503 (2001) – after warning that the taxpayer could be penalized for presenting frivolous and groundless arguments in a collection due process case, the court imposed a $4,000 penalty.

Takaba v. Commissioner, 119 T.C. No. 18 (Dec. 16, 2002) – the court rejected the taxpayer's argument that income received from sources within the United States is not taxable income stating that "[t]he 861 argument is contrary to established law and, for that

reason, frivolous." The court imposed sanctions against the taxpayer in the amount of $15,000, as well as sanctions against the taxpayer's attorney in the amount of $10,500, for making such groundless arguments.

The Nis Family Trust v. Commissioner, 115 T.C. 523, 545-46 (2000) – concluding that the Nis chose "to pursue a strategy of noncooperation and delay, undertaken behind a smokescreen of frivolous tax-protester arguments," the court imposed a $25,000 penalty against them, and also imposed sanctions of more than $10,600 against their attorney for arguing frivolous positions in bad faith.

Edwards v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo. 2002-169, 84 T.C.M. (CCH) 24, 42 (2002) – the court found that sanctions were appropriate against both the taxpayer and the taxpayer's attorney for making groundless arguments. The court stated that "[a]n attorney cannot advance frivolous arguments to this Court with impunity, even if those arguments were initially developed by the client."