

Dominican National Sentenced for Laundering Nearly \$1 Million in Fraudulently Obtained IRS Refund Checks

On Wednesday, July 24, a Dominican national was sentenced in federal court in Boston for laundering close to \$1 million in fraudulently obtained IRS refund checks using 11 different bank accounts at five different banks.

Francisco Oscar “Frank” Gullon, 52, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Leo T. Sorokin to 84 months in prison and ordered to pay restitution of \$1.6 million. Gullon will face deportation proceedings following the completion of his sentence. In April 2019 Gullon was convicted, following a six-day jury trial, of one count of conspiracy, 15 counts of theft or conversion of United States property and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering. Gullon was arrested in the Dominican Republic and extradited to the United States in 2018.

Gullon conspired with an attorney R. David Cohen, who, in 2016, was convicted for his role in the scheme, to deposit and launder over 100 fraudulently obtained tax refund checks. The checks were based on fraudulent tax returns with false W-2 information, usually using the name and Social Security number of a resident of Puerto Rico, where residents are not required to file federal income tax returns. Once the fraudulent returns were accepted by the IRS, refund checks were sent to addresses in Lawrence, East Boston and New York.

From October 2011 until November 2013, Gullon and his co-conspirators obtained and negotiated more than \$1.6 million in fraudulent checks, including nearly \$1 million in checks that

were the product of fraudulent tax refunds. Grullon and his co-conspirators deposited the checks into bank accounts in the name of a front company, AD Professional Association Inc., and in co-conspirator R. David Cohen's attorney client trust accounts. When questioned by bank officials about the suspicious quantity of U.S. Treasury checks, Grullon falsely claimed that he was depositing them as a favor for friends and that he had a check-cashing license. Later, after their bank accounts were closed by several banks, Grullon and Cohen recruited a third co-conspirator and directed him to open accounts for AD Professional Association Inc., deposit more than \$500,000 in treasury checks, and make hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash withdrawals.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Kristina O'Connell, Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation in Boston; Jason Molina, Acting Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston; and Stephen A. Marks, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service, Boston Field Division made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Elysa Q. Wan of Lelling's Criminal Division prosecuted the case.