

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2001**

**SESSION LAW 2002-106
SENATE BILL 1218**

AN ACT TO IMPROVE THE ENFORCEMENT OF TAX LAWS BY
CRIMINALIZING OR INCREASING THE PENALTY FOR CERTAIN FORMS
OF TAX FRAUD AND BY ALLOWING THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
TO DISCLOSE CERTAIN INFORMATION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT
AGENCIES.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 105-228.90(b) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(b) Definitions. – The following definitions apply in this Article:

(4) Income Tax Return Preparer. – Any person who prepares for compensation, or who employs one or more persons to prepare for compensation, any return of tax imposed by Article 4 of this Chapter or any claim for refund of tax imposed by Article 4 of this Chapter. For purposes of this definition, the completion of a substantial portion of a return or claim for refund is treated as the preparation of the return or claim for refund. The term does not include a person merely because the person (i) furnishes typing, reproducing, or other mechanical assistance, (ii) prepares a return or claim for refund of the employer, or an officer or employee of the employer, by whom the person is regularly and continuously employed, (iii) prepares as a fiduciary a return or claim for refund for any person, or (iv) represents a taxpayer in a hearing regarding a proposed assessment."

SECTION 2. G.S. 105-236(9a) reads as rewritten:

"(9a) Aid or Assistance. – Any person, pursuant to or in connection with the revenue laws, who willfully aids, assists in, procures, counsels, or advises the preparation, presentation, or filing of a return, affidavit, claim, or any other document that the person knows is fraudulent or false as to any material matter, whether or not the falsity or fraud is with the knowledge or consent of the person authorized or required to present or file the return, affidavit, claim, or other document, ~~shall be~~ is guilty of a ~~Class H felony~~ felony as follows:

- a. If the person who commits an offense under this subdivision is an income tax return preparer and the amount of all taxes fraudulently evaded on returns filed in one taxable year is one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more, the person is guilty of a Class C felony.
- b. If the person who commits an offense under this subdivision is an income tax return preparer and the amount of all taxes fraudulently evaded on returns filed in one taxable year is less than one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), the person is guilty of a Class F felony.

- c. If the person who commits an offense under this subdivision is not covered under sub-subdivision a. or b. of this subdivision, the person is guilty of a Class H felony."

SECTION 3. G.S. 105-159.1(e) reads as rewritten:

"(e) ~~A An paid preparer of tax returns~~ income tax return preparer may not designate on a return that the taxpayer does or does not desire to make the political contribution authorized in this section unless the taxpayer or the taxpayer's spouse has consented to the designation."

SECTION 4. G.S. 105-236 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"§ 105-236. Penalties.

Penalties assessed by the Secretary under this Subchapter are assessed as an additional tax. Except as otherwise provided by law, and subject to the provisions of G.S. 105-237, the following penalties shall be applicable:

“(10b) Misrepresentation Concerning Payment. – A person who receives money from a taxpayer with the understanding that the money is to be remitted to the Secretary for application to the taxpayer's tax liability and who willfully fails to remit the money to the Secretary is guilty of a Class F felony."

SECTION 5. G.S. 105-259(b) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(b) Disclosure Prohibited. – An officer, an employee, or an agent of the State who has access to tax information in the course of service to or employment by the State may not disclose the information to any other person unless the disclosure is made for one of the following purposes:

“(15a) To furnish to the head of the appropriate State or federal law enforcement agency information concerning the commission of an offense under the jurisdiction of that agency discovered by the Department during a criminal investigation of the taxpayer."

SECTION 6. Sections 1 through 4 of this act become effective December 1, 2002, and apply to actions that are committed on or after that date. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 27th day of August, 2002.

s/ Marc Basnight
President Pro Tempore of the Senate

s/ James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved 4:53 p.m. this 6th day of September, 2002