

South Carolina Lawmaker Found Guilty of Tax Evasion

by Joseph M. Donegan on January 16, 2013

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A South Carolina state legislator was found guilty of misdemeanor tax evasion, but will face no jail time.

Representative Kris Crawford was charged with failing to file tax returns from 2004 and 2007 in a timely manner. His 2004 taxes were filed in 2007, his 2004 and 2005 taxes were paid in 2008, and his returns for 2007 were filed in 2008.

Crawford argued that he depended upon his accountant to file his returns for him and did not actively or purposely violate tax law. However, a jury came back with a guilty verdict for Crawford after prosecutors argued that he failed to ask questions about his returns, even following several issues with his state income taxes, The Associated Press reports.

Crawford, who was recently re-elected to a fourth term, will be required to pay a \$10,000 fine, but will face no jail time. He originally faced one year in jail and \$10,000 for each count.

Crawford, who is also an emergency room doctor and father of four, turned himself in on the misdemeanor charges in April 2010, and fully cooperated with authorities during the duration of the trial. The case was tried in court last year, but the jury was unable to reach a verdict, resulting in a mistrial. In a phone call with the AP, he said that he is happy with the outcome of the case and glad the trial is finally over.

"It certainly provides closure I can live with," Crawford told the AP. "I look forward to getting back to work for the people who elected me twice amid all of this and look forward to continue treating my patients."

If you or your company are faced with violating tax law or would like to discuss issues related to the topic above, please call me, Joseph Donegan.