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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin Man Pleads Guilty to Filing a False Tax Return

United States Attorney Gregory J. Haanstad announced that on January 16, 2025, U.S. District Judge Joseph Stadtmueller accepted the guilty plea of Vikram Naik to one count of filing a false individual income tax return, in violation of 26 U.S.C. § 7206(1).

On October 8, 2024, a federal grand jury returned an indictment charging Naik with three counts of filing false tax returns. According to the indictment and plea agreement, Naik willfully made and subscribed, under penalties of perjury, individual income tax returns (Forms 1040) for the years 2017, 2018, and 2019. Naik had federal income tax withholding amounts that were substantially less than what he reported on each of the returns he filed with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and, as a result, he had taxable income and total tax owed greater than he reported.

According to the plea agreement, Naik was an information technology consultant in Germantown, Wisconsin, who owned and operated Naik Consulting, Inc (NCI) since 2015. Naik provided IT consulting services to some clients who treated him as an employee, paid him wages, and provided annual Forms W-2. Other clients treated Naik as a contractor and paid NCI for Naik's consulting work. Naik was NCI's only employee, and he issued himself a Form W-2 from NCI.

From 2016 through 2019, Naik inflated the federal tax withholdings on his Forms 1040. He falsely reported on Forms W-2 from his company, NCI, that it had withheld federal income tax from his wages in the amounts of \$60,000 in 2017, \$61,500 in 2018, and \$146,000 in 2019. NCI never actually withheld and paid over to the IRS any federal income taxes from Naik's wages. He did the same with some of his consulting clients in tax years 2018 and 2019, as well as his wife's employer in 2018, inflating the federal income tax withheld. Due to the false withholding, his Forms 1040 claimed that he did not owe any taxes and instead was entitled to sizable refunds for each of those years. Naik's false statements caused a tax loss of approximately \$277,257.

“Individuals and businesses who willfully avoid our tax laws and file false returns cause harm to every American taxpayer,” stated U.S. Attorney Haanstad. “I commend the hard work and collaboration of everyone involved in investigating and prosecuting this case.”

“Federal income tax compliance is equally shared among all Americans,” said Jason Bushey, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the IRS Criminal Investigation, Chicago Field Office. “Attempting to defraud the government with elaborate federal tax withholding schemes is unlawful. Mr. Naik’s plea serves as an important reminder that as the 2025 filing season begins, IRS Criminal Investigation is committed to bringing to justice those who shirk their federal income tax responsibilities.”

Sentencing is scheduled for March 21, 2025, at 8:30 a.m., before Judge Stadtmueller. At sentencing, Naik faces up to three years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. He also faces a term of supervised release after completing any period of imprisonment.

The IRS, Criminal Investigation Division, investigated the case, which Assistant United States Attorney John P. Scully is prosecuting.

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