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## **MYSTERY SHOPPERS FIND CONTINUING PROBLEMS WITH PAID TAX PREPARERS**

*Study Finds Problems with Fraud, Refund Anticipation Loans/ Checks, and Failure to Disclose Fees*

As a follow-up to “mystery shopper” testing conducted in 2008 and 2010, advocacy groups in New York and North Carolina conducted limited tests of paid tax preparers. The results? As in previous years, some tax preparers:

- provided shoddy work and/or engaged in tax fraud
- violated state laws in offering refund anticipation loans or refund anticipation checks
- failed to disclose estimated tax preparation fees
- charged surprisingly high fees, including a fee of \$540 this year

“Taxpayers put their trust, their financial health, and their liability for taxes in the hands of commercial preparers,” noted Chi Chi Wu, Staff Attorney at National Consumer Law Center. “Unfortunately, that trust may not always be well placed.”

Read the full report [\*Tax Time 2011: Mystery Shopper Testing in New York and North Carolina Finds Continuing Problems With Tax Preparers\*](#)

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National Consumer Law Center® (NCLC®) is a non-profit organization specializing in consumer issues on behalf of low-income and other vulnerable people. Since 1969, NCLC has worked with legal services and organizations as well as government and private attorneys across the United States, to create sound public policy for low-income and elderly individuals on consumer issues.