



# Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **IRAQI-BORN U.S. CITIZEN SENTENCED TO 48 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS TO THE FBI**

WASHINGTON – Bilal Abood, 38, of Mesquite, Texas, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Ed Kinkeade of the Northern District of Texas to four years in prison for one count of making a false statement to a federal agency.

The sentence was announced by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John P. Carlin, U.S. Attorney John Parker of the Northern District of Texas and Special Agent in Charge Thomas M. Class Sr. of the FBI's Dallas Division.

“My office’s highest priority is and will remain the security of our homeland and the safety of all Americans,” said U.S. Attorney Parker. “We remain more committed than ever to aggressively fighting all terrorism-related acts in north Texas. We appreciate the outstanding work by the Dallas FBI and the assistance of the department’s National Security Division during this investigation and prosecution.”

“It remains among the highest priorities of the FBI to identify individuals who seek to join the ranks of foreign fighters traveling in support of ISIL,” said Special Agent in Charge Class. “Bilal Abood lied to the FBI about the true purpose of his travel to Syria and his allegiance to ISIL, and now he will face the consequences.”

Abood has been in federal custody since his May 2015 arrest by the FBI related to a criminal complaint. He pleaded guilty in October 2015 to a one-count superseding indictment.

Abood admitted that on March 29, 2013, he attempted to depart the United States at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport, but was not allowed to board the international flight. While at the airport, FBI special agents asked Abood about his planned travel and he stated he was merely planning to travel to Iraq to visit family. During a subsequent interview, Abood admitted to FBI special agents that his intent was to travel to Syria to fight the regime of Bashar al-Assad.

On approximately April 29, 2013, Abood left the United States through Mexico and traveled through various countries into Syria. On Sept. 16, 2013, Abood returned to the United States and admitted to FBI special agents that he had traveled to Syria, but he denied supporting any terrorist groups.

A search warrant was executed on Abood's computer on July 9, 2014. A review of that computer revealed that on approximately June 19, 2014, Abood stated, while using his Twitter handle @ibnalislam, "I pledge obedience to the Caliphate Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi." Abood admitted that he knew that al-Baghdadi is the self-proclaimed leader of ISIL and was designated as a specially designated global terrorist on Oct. 4, 2011, and remains so to date.

Abood also admitted that on April 14, 2015, FBI special agents advised him that lying to a federal agent is a crime. He further admitted that on that date, he falsely told FBI special agents that he had never pledged allegiance to al-Baghdadi and that he was aware that the agents were investigating a matter that they suspected could involve international terrorism.

The case was investigated by the FBI's Dallas Division. The prosecution was handled by the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Northern District of Texas with assistance from the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

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