

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
NORTHERN DISTRICT *of* GEORGIA

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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22 people charged in connection with a multi-million dollar Paycheck Protection Program fraud scheme

ATLANTA – Twenty-two individuals, residing across the United States, have been charged with wire fraud conspiracy and other related charges in connection with a fraudulent scheme to obtain approximately \$3,899,377 in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans.

“These defendants allegedly took advantage of the emergency lending provisions of the Paycheck Protection Program that were intended for business owners suffering the economic effects caused by the COVID-19 pandemic,” said U.S. Attorney Kurt R. Erskine. “The charges reinforce our resolve to hold accountable those who steal pandemic relief funds and use them for their own personal gain.”

“The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration aggressively pursues those who misuse IRS information systems in their efforts to defraud programs afforded to the American people under the CARES Act,” said J. Russell George, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. “We appreciate the efforts of the Department of Justice in this endeavor.”

According to U.S. Attorney Erskine, the indictments, and other information presented in court: From April 2020 through August 2020, the conspirators in the scheme allegedly submitted, or assisted in the submission of, PPP loan applications on behalf of twenty-two businesses. In connection with the scheme, defendant Richard Mahee allegedly directed defendant Mark **Mason** to fabricate documents on behalf of individuals that Mahee identified so they could apply for and receive PPP loans. **Mason** allegedly communicated with the purported business owners about the loan amount they wanted to receive, and then fabricated tax documents and other supporting documents to submit with the PPP loan application to support that amount.

For their work on the PPP loan applications, **Mason** and Mahee allegedly received a percentage of the funded loan amount as a “success fee” from each purported business owner. **Mason** then allegedly began fabricating documents to support fraudulent PPP loan applications for other individuals. These individuals allegedly communicated with **Mason** about the loan amount they wanted to receive, submitted loan applications with the supporting documents **Mason** created, and then paid **Mason** a percentage of the funded loan amount.

Mark **Mason**, 49, of Atlanta, Georgia, pleaded guilty on January 4, 2022 to one count of wire fraud and one count of money laundering in connection with his involvement in the loans obtained by M&N Enterprise LLC, d/b/a Atlanta Business Capital and Advocate Business Capital LLC. As part of his guilty plea, **Mason** admitted his participation in fraudulent conduct totaling between \$3.5 million and \$9.5 million.

In addition to the charges against **Mason**, twenty-one other defendants have been charged in eight separate indictments, the last of which was unsealed on January 27, 2022:

- Richard Mahee, 49, of Princeton Junction, New Jersey, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, ARG Media LLC, and several other businesses' loans.
- Kristen Alexander, 49, of Denver, Colorado, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with her involvement in several businesses' loans.
- David Burge, 67, of Flat Rock, North Carolina, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, Elemental Comfort, LLC.
- Gina Destito, 59, of Elgin, South Carolina, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with her involvement in the loan obtained by her business, HomePoppins.com LLC.
- Jim White, 49, of Hammonton, New Jersey, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, AJW Home Services and Design LLC.
- Morgan Brown, 29, of Nashville, Tennessee, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, BHG LLC.
- Carlos Stephens, 50, of Gretna, Louisiana, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, 31 Minds LLC.
- Marvin Lewton, 57, of Atlanta, Georgia, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, Powers Transport Group LLC, and the loan application filed for his business, DirtySouthHipHop Online Media Group LLC.
- Ion Overman, 52, of Valley Village, California, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering in connection with her involvement in the loan obtained by her business, Bryanston Square, Inc.
- Dale Godboldo, 46, of Valley Village, California, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering in connection with his involvement in the loans obtained by his business, Mahout Star LLC, and the loan obtained by Bryanston Square, Inc.
- Freddy Mitchell, 53, of Asheville, North Carolina, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, Freddy Mitchell & Associate LLC.
- Timothy Patrick, 54, of Asheville, North Carolina, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, Integrity Management Group/IMG, and the loan obtained by Freddy Mitchell & Associate LLC.
- Melissa Myrick, 44, of Jacksonville, Florida, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with her involvement in several businesses' loans.

- Kirk Codrington, 47, of East Flat Rock, North Carolina, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, KC Global Enterprises Inc.
- Dereck Clark, 47, of Jacksonville, Florida, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, Geppetto, d/b/a Dee's Landscaping LLC.
- Michael Myrick, 39, of Jacksonville, Florida, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, MYCO Enterprises LLC.
- Darius McCants, 47, of Birmingham, Alabama, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, BBF Inc.
- Dondre Berry, 41, of Atlanta, Georgia, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, Houzzit Inc.
- Marcos Soza, 41, of Phoenix, Arizona, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, Yes Auto Sales Inc.
- Brittany Shearod, 32, of Atlanta, Georgia, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in connection with her involvement in the loan obtained by her business, Bez Knows Talent LLC.
- Michael McGee, Jr., 32, of Atlanta, Georgia, is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering in connection with his involvement in the loan obtained by his business, Arc Michael Logistics LLC.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictments only contain charges. The defendants are presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendants' guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by the U.S. Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Nicholas Hartigan and Lauren Macon are prosecuting the case.

On May 17, 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the Department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus>

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

For further information please contact the U.S. Attorney's Public Affairs Office at USAGAN.PressEmails@usdoj.gov or (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is <http://www.justice.gov/usao-ndga>.

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