



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
MIDDLE DISTRICT *of* PENNSYLVANIA

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Pennsylvania

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, March 1, 2022

Carlisle Woman Sentenced For Illegal Monetary Transactions Involving Covid-19 Relief Funds

HARRISBURG- The United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania announced that on February 28, 2022, Christina McConnell, age 43, of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, was sentenced by United States District Court Judge Christopher C. Conner to two years of probation, including four months of home confinement, for engaging in illegal monetary transactions involving \$232,300 in COVID-19 relief funds.

The COVID-19 relief funds at issue were guaranteed by the U.S. Small Business Administration through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The PPP is designed to help small businesses facing financial difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic. Funded by the March 2020 CARES Act, PPP funds are offered in forgivable loans, provided that certain criteria are met, including use of the funds for employee payroll, mortgage interest, lease, and utilities expenses.

According to United States Attorney John C. Gurganus, Christina McConnell knowingly used criminally derived PPP loan proceeds to purchase personal use vehicles and a residential property in June and July 2020. Christina McConnell's husband, Keith McConnell, also pled guilty to the underlying PPP wire fraud and related money laundering offenses, and is awaiting sentencing. The Court ordered Christina McConnell to pay \$232,200 in restitution for disbursement to the victims, and she paid the full amount prior to sentencing.

The case was investigated by the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI). Assistant U.S. Attorney Samuel S. Dalke prosecuted 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>.

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Topic(s):

Coronavirus

Component(s):

USAO - Pennsylvania, Middle

Updated March 1, 2022