



Department of Justice

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MULTI-AGENCY INVESTIGATION LEADS TO INDICTMENT OF FOUR ON CHARGES OF BENEFITS FRAUD, CONSPIRACY, MONEY LAUNDERING

DAYTON – A federal grand jury has charged four Dayton men with conspiring to defraud the USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other related crimes through a Dayton grocery store and restaurant they owned and operated.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine, Joe Smith, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General (USDA), Darryl Williams, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Criminal Investigation, Robert Booker, Executive Director, Ohio Investigative Unit and other members of the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission Task Force investigating the case announced the indictment unsealed today.

Named in the indictment are:

Al-Idu al-Gaheem, 62, formerly known as Lawrence Phillips,
Abdul R. Qadir, 63, formerly known as Frank Appleberry, Jr.,
Abdul H. Yamini Sr, 70, formerly known as Larry Shipp, and
Omar S. Yahya, 55, formerly known as Darnell Bernard Watts.

All four are charged with conspiracy to launder money, which is punishable by up to 20 years imprisonment, and conspiracy to commit food stamp fraud, which carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison. Between 2007 and 2011, the four owned, operated and were employed at an inner-city Dayton retail grocery store formerly known as Five Pillars Market and Restaurant.

The 46-count indictment alleges that the four conspired to traffic in electronic benefit cards in order to defraud the USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The defendants are also accused of committing acts of wire fraud, money laundering, and illegal structuring of financial transactions to avoid federal reporting requirements in order to further the conspiracies. The indictment charges that the fraudulent acts resulted in more than \$3.8 million in federal money being deposited via wire transfers into the market’s local bank account between January 2009 and May 2011 and that more than \$1.2 million in currency was withdrawn from the accounts in ways designed to evade federal currency transaction reporting requirements.

Yahya was indicted on an additional charge of being a felon in possession of a firearm which carries a ten-year maximum sentence. All four will be summoned to appear before a U.S. Magistrate Judge in Dayton.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. The defendants are entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation was conducted by a task force operating under the Ohio Organized Crime Investigation Commission. In addition to the agencies named above, other agencies participating in the task force and in this investigation include the Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms, Tobacco and Explosives (ATF), the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation, and police departments in Centerville, Kettering, Miamisburg, Moraine, Oakwood and West Carrollton.

Stewart commended the cooperative investigation by the task force members, and recognized Assistant U.S. Attorney Dwight Keller, who is prosecuting the case.

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