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Department of Justice

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District of New Jersey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, March 26, 2021

Second California Man Charged with Conspiracy to Launder Proceeds of Fraud Schemes Targeting New Jersey Law Firm and SBA Loans

NEWARK, N.J. – A second man from California has been charged with conspiring to launder money that originated from fraudulently obtained loans from the U.S. Small Business Association and from a business email compromise scheme that targeted a law firm based in New Jersey, Acting U.S. Attorney Rachael A. Honig announced.

Anthony Debose Hannah, 57, of Moreno Valley, California, is charged by complaint with one count of money laundering conspiracy. Hannah was taken into custody this morning in California and is scheduled to appear by videoconference today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Shashi H. Kewalramani in Riverside, California, federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

In June 2020, Victim 1 communicated via email with a law firm in New Jersey that was helping Victim 1, a resident of Bergen County, New Jersey, with a real estate transaction. One of the law firm's email accounts was compromised and someone purporting to be emailing on behalf of the law firm sent instructions to Victim 1 to wire approximately \$560,000 into an escrow account under the name "Eric's Commercial LLC." Victim 1 wired approximately \$560,000 into a business bank account controlled by Eric Bullard, Hannah's conspirator. Victim 1 did not intend for the money to be transferred to Bullard and sent the wire transfer to Bullard's account under the belief that the wire instructions had come from the New Jersey law firm.

Shortly after the \$560,000 was transferred into the Eric's Commercial LLC bank account, approximately 10 cash withdrawals were made from the account totaling \$96,275. On June 14, 2020, three large wire transfers totaling approximately \$460,000 were made from the Eric's Commercial Bank Account to other bank accounts. One of those transfers was a wire transfer of approximately \$230,000 to an account in the name of "Anthony Property Management & Development," an account controlled by Hannah. Hannah opened the Anthony Property Management account on May 18, 2020, and was the sole signatory on the account.

On June 15, 2020, approximately \$230,000 was transferred from the Anthony Property Management account to another business account that does not appear to be controlled by Hannah or Bullard.

In addition to laundering of the proceeds from the business email compromise, Bullard and Hannah also obtained and laundered funds from the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program. In July 2020, Hannah received into a business bank account that he controlled \$145,400 from an SBA EIDL loan intended for a pharmacy company with a listed location in Idaho, some of which he shared with Bullard. Bullard also received a \$143,100 SBA EIDL loan intended for a pharmacy company with a listed location in Colorado. A few days later, Bullard wrote a check to Hannah for \$51,000. In addition to the SBA loan money, Hannah also received payments from the Illinois Department of Employment Security.

Bullard was arrested on similar charges last week in California and was ordered detained; he is pending transfer to the District of New Jersey.

The count of money laundering conspiracy carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of up to \$500,000 or twice the value of the monetary instrument or funds involved in the transfer, whichever is greater.

Acting U.S. Attorney Honig credited special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge George M. Crouch Jr. in Newark, with the investigation leading to the charges.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jamie L. Hoxie of the Cybercrime Unit in Newark.

The charges and allegations in the complaints are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Attachment(s):

[Download Hannah.Complaint.pdf](#)

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[USAO - New Jersey](#)

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