

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
970 Broad Street, Seventh Floor
Newark, New Jersey 07102



Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney

More Information? Call the Assistant U.S. Attorney or other contact listed below to see if more information is available.

News on the Internet: News Releases and related documents are posted at our website.
Go to: <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/index.html>

Assistant U.S. Attorney:
MARK McCARREN
973-645-2867

robi0325.rel
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 25, 2008

Maplewood Man Indicted for Money Laundering;
Case Stems from “Operation Bid Rig” Corruption Probe

(More)

Public Affairs Office
Michael Drewniak, PAO

973-645-2888

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/index.html>

NEWARK – An Indictment was returned today against a former employee of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, charging him with conspiracy and money laundering for a series of transactions involving what he believed were the proceeds of loansharking, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Leroy Robinson, 51, of Maplewood, was first charged in a criminal Complaint on Jan. 25 with one count of money laundering conspiracy. The Indictment returned today formally charges him with one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering and five counts of money laundering.

During the period discussed in the Indictment, Robinson was employed by the Turnpike Authority.

The Indictment charges Robinson with engaging in a series of money laundering transactions totaling \$120,000 from April 2004 through February 2005. Robinson set the transactions in motion after meeting with a cooperating witness, who held himself out to be in the construction business in Florida and New Jersey, but who also purported to be involved in loansharking and money laundering.

Robinson met repeatedly to conduct the money laundering transactions with two FBI undercover agents who purported to be employees of the confidential witness. The Indictment alleges that in exchange for large sums of cash, Robinson provided checks from his business back to the undercover agents in lesser amounts. In this way, Robinson earned a net 10 percent commission on the money laundering transactions in which he engaged.

The Indictment cites audio and video recordings from August and October 2004 of Robinson saying to the undercover agents that he could provide law enforcement escorts as the undercover agents accepted a large cash delivery. Robinson allegedly led the undercover agents to an isolated construction site in Rutherford where a transfer of the cash delivery could be made at a later date.

According to the Indictment, on Oct. 8, 2004, Robinson met with the undercover agents near the Rutherford construction site adjacent to a hotel. Robinson allegedly took \$1,000 from the undercover agent and gave \$800 in cash in an envelope to a co-conspirator – the promised “law enforcement” escort – who had arrived in a Crown Victoria in the hotel parking lot. A third undercover agent then arrived and transferred a black gym bag into the car of one of the undercover agents, whereupon the co-conspirator introduced by Robinson closely escorted the car with the bag through Newark, onto Route 22 and to the Garden State Parkway.

The money laundering conspiracy count carries a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison and a \$500,000 fine. Each of the money laundering counts carries a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$500,000 or more.

The Indictment also adds a forfeiture count, in which the government seeks \$120,000 from Robinson.

Robinson was arrested on Jan. 25 at his home by Special Agents of the FBI. He made an initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Claire C. Cecchi, who set bail at \$150,000 secured by equity in Robinson's home.

Robinson next will be required to appear for an arraignment on the Indictment before a U.S. District Judge at a date to be determined.

The arrest of Robinson represented the most recent charge to stem from Operation Bid Rig, the FBI undercover operation which has resulted in the arrest and conviction of more than 40 individuals, including approximately 20 public officials from Monmouth and Ocean Counties, including the former mayors of Asbury Park, Brick Township, Hazlet, Keyport, Ocean Township and West Long Branch.

Despite indictment, all defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI's Red Bank Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun, with the investigation that resulted in today's Indictment.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark McCarren of the Special Prosecutions Division.

-end-

Defense Counsel: John McDonald, Esq. Somerset