



***United States Attorney
District of New Jersey***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 9, 2010

www.justice.gov/usao/nj

CONTACT: Rebekah Carmichael
Office of Public Affairs
(973) 645-2888

**STATEN ISLAND MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ASSAULTING
A DEBTOR TO COLLECT AN ILLEGAL LOAN**

TRENTON, N.J. – Anthony Cariello of East Brunswick, New Jersey, pleaded guilty today to an extortion conspiracy charge stemming from his assault of a debtor to collect an illegal loan, United States Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Cariello, 33, pleaded guilty before Senior District Judge Anne E. Thompson to an Information charging him with conspiracy to collect an extension of credit through extortionate means. Cariello was released on a \$100,000 bond pending sentencing, scheduled for September 24, 2010.

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

In early 2006, Cariello made illegal, high-interest loans to various debtors in Staten Island, New York and elsewhere. In March 2006, Cariello, James LaForte Jr., and others traveled from Staten Island to Monmouth County, New Jersey, to collect re-payment of an illegal loan Cariello had given to a person identified in the Information as the “Victim.”

After finding the Victim, Cariello, LaForte, and their co-conspirators confronted the Victim near a delicatessen in Monmouth County and demanded repayment on the loan. After the Victim refused, Cariello assaulted the debtor, causing him to fall. Cariello and LaForte then kicked the Victim as he lay on the ground. After the assault, the Victim gave Cariello approximately \$900 in cash, and made another cash payment of approximately \$1,200 later that month.

On April 26, 2010, Judge Thompson sentenced LaForte to three years in prison for his role in this offense, as well as a loansharking conspiracy and arson conspiracy unrelated to Cariello’s plea.

At sentencing, Cariello faces a maximum potential penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000, or twice the pecuniary gain or victim loss from the offense.

In determining an actual sentence, Judge Thompson will consult the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant’s criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining the sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Michael B. Ward, with the investigation leading to today's guilty plea.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony Moscato of the U.S. Attorney's Office Organized Crime/Gangs Unit in Newark.

10-170

###

Defense Attorney: K. Anthony Thomas, Assistant Federal Public Defender, Newark, New Jersey