



PRESS NOTICE

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September 29, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COLUMBIA LAWYERS ARRAIGNED ON FEDERAL FRAUD, MONEY LAUNDERING CHARGES

Columbia, South Carolina ---- United States Attorney W. Walter Wilkins stated today that attorneys John Fitzgerald O'Connor, Jr, age 63, and Michael D. Shavo, age 38, both of Columbia, appeared in federal court this morning for arraignment on 17 charges that they conspired to launder stolen money, commit mail fraud, and mislead federal investigators. United States Magistrate Judge Paige J. Gossett set an unsecured bond of \$75,000.00 for each defendant, and ordered that they surrender their passports and restrict their travel to South Carolina while awaiting trial.

The indictment alleges that despite knowing that their client, William J. Trier, II, of Aiken, had embezzled a large amount of money from his employer,

O'Connor and Shavo devised a plan to hide the stolen money from federal authorities by transferring it amongst numerous shell corporations they set up for Trier. O'Connor was also charged with obstructing a federal investigation, and Shavo was additionally charged with lying to federal investigators.

Trier pled guilty to mail fraud and money laundering on April 30, 2008, and was recently sentenced to 63 months in federal prison, ordered to pay \$5,272,556 in restitution, and to forfeit millions of dollars in assets.

Another attorney, John W. Harte, Jr., age 63, of Aiken, pled guilty on September 18th to conspiracy to commit mail fraud and money laundering for his role in the scheme. He is awaiting sentencing.

If convicted on all counts, O'Connor faces a maximum possible sentence of 280 years in prison and a fine of \$4 million dollars. Shavo faces a maximum possible sentence of 270 years in prison and a fine of \$3.75 million dollars. Both men also face the forfeiture of assets if convicted.

Mr. Wilkins stated that the case was investigated by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Postal Inspection Service, and the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation, and that he has assigned the case to Assistant United States Attorneys Deborah B. Barbier and Mark C. Moore of the Columbia office for prosecution.

The United States Attorney stated that all charges in this Indictment are merely accusations and that all defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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