



## U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Arkansas*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **CREDIT CARD SKIMMERS INDICTED** **FOR CONSPIRING TO PRODUCE COUNTERFEIT CREDIT CARDS**

**Little Rock** - U.S. Attorney Jane W. Duke and Brian T. Marr, Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service, announced that Carlos Lamont Brown, age 32, of Lithonia, Georgia; James Edmond Hinton, age 40, of Little Rock, Arkansas; Chantell Denise Bentley, age 36, of Lithonia, Georgia; and Jared Scott Sentell, age 23, of Little Rock, Arkansas, were indicted today by a federal grand jury in the Eastern District of Arkansas for conspiring to produce counterfeit access devices, that is, counterfeit credit/debit cards. In addition to the conspiracy charge, Brown and Hinton are each charged with one count of possessing device-making equipment. Brown is also charged with possessing over fifteen unauthorized access devices.

Investigation revealed that in September 2008, patrons at two different Little Rock restaurants had their debit/credit card information scanned with a skimming device by their waiters as they paid for their bill. A skimmer is a small hand-held device able to read and capture information stored on the magnetic strip of a credit/debit card. The information captured and stored on the skimming device was later downloaded onto a computer and subsequently transferred to various gift and prepaid debit cards. Those bogus cards were then able to be used as if they were valid cards tied to the original restaurant patrons' accounts. Upon reviewing their account activity, the rightful cardholders noticed the unauthorized charges and alerted the authorities.

"Identity theft and credit card fraud are growing problems. Unfortunately, there are many times when it is necessary for us to relinquish physical possession of our credit or debit card to complete a transaction. This case serves as a prime example of why it is important for consumers to regularly monitor their account activity and promptly report any suspicious charges to their financial institution and/or the appropriate authorities," stated Duke.

The defendants face a statutory penalty of not more than five years incarceration, not more than \$250,000, or both for the conspiracy count. The statutory penalty for possession of device-making equipment is not more than 15 years incarceration, not more than \$250,000 fine, or both. The statutory penalty for possession of over 15 unauthorized access devices is not more than ten years incarceration, not more than \$250,000, or both.

The investigation was conducted by the United States Secret Service, the Little Rock Police Department, and the Hot Springs Village Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Jana Harris will prosecute this case for the United States.

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An indictment is a form of accusation and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.