



# Department of Justice

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01/31/11

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## **SECOND DEFENDANT SENTENCED IN CHECK THEFT AND IDENTITY FRAUD SCHEME**

### *Defendants Made Up Companies to Fit Names of Stolen Commercial Checks*

ATLANTA, GA - ORLANDO KING, 36, of Atlanta, Georgia, was sentenced to federal prison today by United States District Judge J. Owen Forrester on charges of bank fraud and aggravated identity theft, related to a million-dollar scheme.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said of the case, "These defendants stole over a million dollars in a stolen business check scheme. As the money rolled in, these defendants probably thought they had hit the jackpot, but that success was short-lived. Now each will spend over ten years of their life in federal prison and must pay back the money they stole."

Martin D. Phanco, Postal Inspector in Charge of the Atlanta Division said, "This investigation uncovered a fraudulent scheme which benefitted the defendants. The defendants stole from the U.S. Mail which ultimately compromised the public's trust in the nation's mail system. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service mission is to protect the U.S. mail system from criminal misuse like that demonstrated in this case. We will not let anyone stand in the way of that mission."

KING was sentenced to 13 years in prison to be followed by 5 years of supervised release. KING was also ordered to pay restitution totaling \$919,436. The Judge also ordered that \$183,358 found at KING's residence during a November 14, 2008 search be also paid to his victims. KING pleaded guilty to the charges on February 1, 2010.

Co-conspirator HAROLD WARDLAW, 41, of Atlanta, Georgia, was sentenced on August 10, 2010, to serve 12 years and 1 month in prison to be followed by 5 years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay restitution totaling \$1,010,421. WARDLAW pleaded guilty to the charges on January 26, 2010.

According to United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court: KING and WARDLAW obtained checks drawn on commercial

accounts which were stolen from the mail. The checks were written in large dollar amounts and were made payable to business entities. Once they obtained a stolen check, KING or WARDLAW registered a Georgia corporation in a name that was the same as or similar to the business that was named as the payee on the check. KING and WARDLAW then recruited others to deposit the check and withdraw the funds derived from the stolen check before the theft was discovered by the victim company. The total dollar amount of the stolen checks that were obtained by KING and WARDLAW was over \$1 million.

KING and WARDLAW also obtained stolen social security numbers, dates of birth and other identifying information of individual victims. They used that information to open credit card accounts and to establish lines of credit at local banks in the names of the identity theft victims. KING and WARDLAW then used the fraudulently obtained credit cards to make fraudulent charges to businesses that KING established using other stolen identities or they would obtain cash by making draws on the fraudulently established lines of credit.

This case was investigated by Inspectors with the United States Postal Inspection Service.

Assistant United States Attorney William L. McKinnon, Jr. prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, or Charlyse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is [www.justice.gov/usao/gan](http://www.justice.gov/usao/gan).