



U. S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney  
Northern District of Illinois

Patrick J. Fitzgerald  
United States Attorney

Federal Building  
219 South Dearborn Street, Fifth Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60604  
(312) 353-5300

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
THURSDAY JULY 19, 2007  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/iln](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/iln)

PRESS CONTACTS:  
AUSA Barry Miller (312)886-1325  
AUSA Nancy Miller (312)353-4224  
Randall Samborn (312)353-5318

**LANDSCAPE EXECUTIVE INDICTED IN ALLEGED  
CHICAGO SCHOOLS MINORITY CONTRACTOR FRAUD SCHEME**

CHICAGO – A suburban landscape company executive was indicted today on federal fraud charges for allegedly using a sham minority business enterprise as a “pass-through” to swindle the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) in connection with landscaping contracts totaling more than \$1.5 million. The defendant, **Aidan E. Monahan**, was charged with one count of mail fraud in an indictment returned today by a federal grand jury, announced Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Monahan, 57, of Bensenville, president of Monahan Landscape Company of Arlington Heights, has been in federal custody in San Diego since earlier this month when he was arrested and a criminal complaint charging him in this case was unsealed. He is being detained pending transfer to Chicago, where he will be arraigned at a later date in U.S. District Court.

According to the indictment, prior to 2003, Monahan Landscape had contracts with the CPS to provide landscaping services for all of its geographic regions. In 2003, the CPS designated contracts for three geographic regions for companies that were minority or women business enterprises. Each contract required that at least 50 percent of the work be performed by the minority

business enterprise awarded the contract, and that no more than 25 percent of the contract be subcontracted out to a business that was not owned by a minority or a woman.

The indictment alleges that Monahan Landscape arranged for a certified minority business enterprise identified as Company A to bid on the contracts for those three regions, using estimates provided by Monahan. Company A was awarded the contracts, and the indictment alleges that CPS paid more than \$1.5 million to Company A between April 2003 and September 2006 in connection with the contracts for those three regions. The indictment alleges that Company A's bank account was actually controlled by Monahan, and the work was performed at Monahan's direction with equipment provided by Monahan Landscape.

"Fraud in government contracts is a serious problem. We will continue to prosecute companies that use sham minority contractors, or any other kind of fraud, to obtain public contracts, where appropriate," Mr. Fitzgerald said. "The school system's Inspector General was a true partner with the FBI in this investigation and provided extensive assistance."

The matter was referred to the U.S. Attorney's Office by the Office of Inspector General for the Chicago Public Schools, which cooperated in the investigation. Inspector General James Sullivan and Director Richard Slingerland assisted the FBI in its work. The government is being represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Barry Miller and Nancy Miller.

If convicted, mail fraud carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. As an alternative, the Court may impose a maximum fine on the mail fraud count equal to twice the loss to any victim or twice the gain to any defendant, whichever is greater. Restitution is mandatory and the Court would determine the appropriate sentence to be imposed under the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The public is reminded that an indictment contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent and are entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

###