



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Northern District of Illinois
Western Division*

*Michael D. Love
Assistant U.S. Attorney
www.usdoj.gov/usao/iln*

*308 West State Street - Room 300
Rockford, Illinois 61101*

*PH: (815) 987-4444
FAX: (815) 987-4236*

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KINGSTON MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR THEFT OF SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

ROCKFORD PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and WILLIAM COTTER, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Chicago Field Division of the Social Security Administration - Office of the Inspector General, today made the following announcement:

This morning, in federal court in Rockford, **ROGER L. FESSLER, 67**, of Kingston, Illinois, was sentenced to serve 18 months in prison for his conviction for embezzling Social Security benefits for his personal benefit. The court also sentenced Fessler to serve 3 years of supervised release following his imprisonment, and ordered him to pay restitution in the amount of \$207,915.

On October 27, 2010, Fessler pled guilty to embezzling Social Security benefits for his personal benefit. Fessler admitted that his mother died in January 1986, and beginning in February 1986 he began endorsing his mother's name on Social Security benefit checks payable to his deceased mother, cashing the checks, and using the proceeds for his personal expenses. He further admitted that in approximately 2000, when Social Security began to require benefits to be direct deposited into accounts, he opened an account at a local financial institution and listed his mother's name and his name on the account as joint owners of the account. Fessler also admitted that after the monthly deposit of Social Security benefits he withdrew the funds and used them for his personal expenses. Fessler admitted that he continued this through April 2010, knowing that he had no right to receive or use the Social Security benefits payable to his deceased mother, and that he had intentionally refrained from notifying the Social Security Administration of his mother's death so he could continue to receive the Social Security benefits that were paid for her.

The case was investigated by the Chicago Division of the Social Security Administration - Office of the Inspector General. The case was prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorney MICHAEL D. LOVE.

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