



U.S. Department of Justice

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Northern District of Illinois

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THREE MEN CHARGED IN IDENTITY THEFT CONSPIRACY

ROCKFORD — Three men were indicted Tuesday, Nov. 8, in federal court and charged with obtaining personal identification information of others and using the information in a conspiracy to commit fraud. The fraud allegedly occurred from June 2010 through May 2011.

According to the indictment, Tony Hardy, 31, and Mark Griffin, 42, both of Rockford, and Anthony Taylor, 42, of Marietta, Georgia, obtained names, social security numbers, dates of birth, and bank account numbers, by unlawful means. As part of the conspiracy, the men allegedly used the other persons' identification information to obtain merchandise from retail stores and then attempted to return the merchandise to another one of the store's locations for a cash refund. It is also alleged that Hardy and Taylor used names, social security numbers, and the dates of birth of at least 16 individuals, which had been taken from a medical office in Rockford.

The charge in the indictment carries the a maximum penalty of 5 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and mandatory restitution. The Court may also impose a fine totaling twice the loss to any victim or twice the gain to the defendant, whichever is greater. If convicted, the Court must impose a reasonable sentence under the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The indictment was announced by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Thomas P. Brady, Inspector-in-Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service in Chicago. The Rockford Police Department assisted in the investigation.

The government is being represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael D. Love.

An indictment contains only a charge 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.

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