



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, June 21, 2011
WWW.JUSTICE.GOV/USAO/MN

Plymouth man pleads guilty in connection with Trevor Cook Ponzi scheme

MINNEAPOLIS – Earlier today in federal court, a 54-year-old Plymouth man pleaded guilty to lending credibility to and ultimately persuading others to invest in a multi-million-dollar Ponzi scheme orchestrated by Trevor Cook. Christopher Pettengill pleaded guilty to one count of securities fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and one count of money laundering. Pettengill, who was charged on June 13, 2011, entered his plea before United States District Court Chief Judge Michael J. Davis.

In his plea agreement, Pettengill admitted that from February through September of 2008, he knowingly concealed information from investors concerning the foreign currency program sold by Pettengill, Cook, and others called the Oxford Entities Currency Program. While concealing that vital information, Pettengill and his coconspirators continued to secure millions of dollars in investment assets from investors while assuring them that the investments involved little or no risk. In addition, Pettengill admitted conducting numerous wire transfers during the course of the conspiracy, and on September 3, 2008, he admitted making a personal credit card payment of \$11,369.19, which was derived from the proceeds of the securities fraud.

For his crimes, Pettengill faces a potential maximum penalty of ten years in prison on the money laundering charge, five years for securities fraud, and five years for conspiracy to commit wire fraud. Chief Judge Davis will determine his sentence at a future hearing, yet to be scheduled. In August of 2010, Cook was sentenced to 300 months in federal prison for orchestrating the scam. On March 22, 2011, co-defendant Jon Jason Greco was charged with two counts of making false statements to federal agents in relation to the case.

This case is the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation Division. It is being prosecuted by Assistant

U.S. Attorney Tracy L. Perzel.

This law enforcement action is in part sponsored by the interagency Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force. The task force was established to wage an aggressive, coordinated and proactive effort to investigate and prosecute financial crimes. It includes representatives from a broad range of federal agencies, regulatory authorities, inspectors general, and state and local law enforcement who, working together, bring to bear a powerful array of criminal and civil enforcement resources. The task force is working to improve efforts across the federal executive branch and, with state and local partners, investigate and prosecute significant financial crimes, ensure just and effective punishment for those who perpetrate financial crimes, combat discrimination in the lending and financial markets, and recover proceeds for victims of financial crimes.

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An indictment is a determination by a grand jury that there is probable cause to believe that offenses have been committed by a defendant. A defendant, of course, is presumed innocent until he or she pleads guilty or is proven guilty at trial.