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April 8, 2009

PHILADELPHIA DOCTOR CHARGED WITH RUNNING PILL MILL

PHILADELPHIA - United States Attorney Laurie Magid today announced the filing of an Indictment¹ against Laurence T. McKinney, M.D. charging that McKinney illegally prescribed painkillers and sedatives outside the usual course of professional practice and not for a legitimate medical purpose. McKinney, a former board-certified OB-GYN, was the operator of McKinney Medical Center located at 7514 Frankford Avenue, in Philadelphia, which appeared to be a medical clinic, specializing in physical therapy and rehabilitation services, but in actuality was a prescription "pill mill." Dr. McKinney's patients ("customers") could, for a \$100 fee, obtain prescriptions for controlled and non-controlled prescription drugs without there being a legitimate medical purpose for these prescriptions.

Dr. McKinney is charged with prescribing dosages of Percocet and Xanax. Percocet, a Schedule II controlled substance, is legally prescribed to combat acute, severe pain. Xanax, a Schedule IV controlled substance, is a sedative and anti-anxiety agent and muscle relaxant. Both drugs are highly addictive, among the most frequently abused prescription drugs, and are frequently illegally distributed as "street drugs" which have a high illegal street market value.

"McKinney is charged with illegally distributing potent and addictive prescription drugs," said Magid. "As a doctor, McKinney had a duty to prescribe these medications only for people with medical needs. McKinney systematically abused his license so that he could line his own pockets. He posed a grave danger to the public by prescribing these highly addictive drugs in large quantities to people who were abusing them."

Dr. McKinney is also charged with maintaining a place for the illegal distribution of controlled substances. This charge usually arises in cases where individuals illegally sell drugs out of a house or other location. In this case, this charge is based on McKinney's sustained use of his medical office for the sale of prescriptions of Percocet and Xanax for no legitimate medical purpose, rather than the usual course of a professional medical practice.

¹An Indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANT

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR YEAR OF BIRTH
Laurence T. McKinney, M.D.	Philadelphia, PA	53

If convicted the defendant faces a maximum possible sentence of 695 years imprisonment and the advisory sentencing guideline range is 87 to 108 months imprisonment.

The case was investigated by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and the City of Philadelphia Police Department and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Anita Eve.

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