

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI
WESTERN DIVISION



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

CRIMINAL NO. **5:25-cr-4-DCB-ASH**

WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON

15 U.S.C. § 1

CRIMINAL INFORMATION

The United States Attorney charges:

1. **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** as a defendant on the charges stated below.

At the times relevant to this Information:

BACKGROUND

2. **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-6, engaged in the sale of sports equipment to schools throughout the Southern District of Mississippi and elsewhere.

3. **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** knew that public schools in Mississippi require bids from two separate companies for procurements over \$5,000.

4. Schools generally procured sports equipment through the process of requesting and obtaining bids from multiple companies and would typically award a contract for sports equipment to the company that submitted the lowest bid.

5. The conspiracies charged below in Counts 1–4 affected at least \$4,311,543.92 of sales to COMPANY-6 from at least 552 procurements, to at least 59 schools.

CO-CONSPIRATORS

6. COMPANY-1, a company organized under the laws of Louisiana, with its principal place of business in Louisiana, was a distributor of sports equipment engaged in selling sports equipment in Mississippi.

7. COMPANY-2, a company organized under the laws of Tennessee, with its principal place of business in Tennessee, was a retailer and distributor of sports equipment engaged in selling sports equipment in Mississippi.

8. COMPANY-3, a company organized under the laws of Mississippi, with its principal place of business in Mississippi, was a retailer and distributor of sports equipment engaged in selling sports equipment in Mississippi.

9. COMPANY-4, a company organized under the laws of Mississippi, with its principal place of business in Mississippi, was a retailer and distributor of sports equipment engaged in selling sports equipment in Mississippi.

10. COMPANY-5, a company organized under the laws of Delaware, with its principal place of business in Illinois, was a manufacturer and distributor of sports equipment engaged in selling sports equipment in Mississippi.

11. COMPANY-6, a company organized under the laws of Mississippi, with its principal place of business in Mississippi, was a retailer and distributor of sports equipment engaged in selling sports equipment in Mississippi.

12. Maurice Daniel Bowering, Jr. was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-6.

13. Robert Tucker Craig was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-6, and then later was a part-owner of COMPANY-6.

14. Robert Douglas Heflin was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-4, and then later as a sales professional by COMPANY-6.

15. Bradley David Willcutt was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-6.

16. Charles Ferrell Trimm was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-5.

17. CO-CONSPIRATOR-1 was the owner of COMPANY-1.

18. CO-CONSPIRATOR-2 was employed as a part of the administrative support staff by COMPANY-6.

19. CO-CONSPIRATOR-3 was employed as a part of the administrative support staff by COMPANY-6.

20. CO-CONSPIRATOR-4 was employed as a part of the administrative support staff by COMPANY-6.

21. CO-CONSPIRATOR-5 was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-6.

22. CO-CONSPIRATOR-6 was president of COMPANY-2.

23. CO-CONSPIRATOR-7 was employed as a financial manager by COMPANY-2.

24. CO-CONSPIRATOR-8 was employed as a financial manager and controller by COMPANY-2.

25. CO-CONSPIRATOR-9 was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-2.

26. CO-CONSPIRATOR-10 was a part-owner, and then later sole owner of COMPANY-3.

27. CO-CONSPIRATOR-11 was an employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-6.

28. CO-CONSPIRATOR-12 was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-6.

29. CO-CONSPIRATOR-13 was employed as a part of the administrative support staff by COMPANY-6.

30. CO-CONSPIRATOR-14 was employed as a sales professional by COMPANY-4.

DESCRIPTION OF THE OFFENSES

COUNT 1 (15 U.S.C. § 1)

31. Paragraphs 1 through 30 are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

32. The relevant period for Count 1 is that period from at least as early as July 2013 through at least as late as July 2023 (“Count 1 relevant period”).

33. During the Count 1 relevant period, in the Southern District of Mississippi and elsewhere, **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** knowingly entered into and engaged in a conspiracy with COMPANY-1, Maurice Daniel Bowering Jr., Robert Tucker Craig, Bradley David Willcutt, CO-CONSPIRATOR-1, CO-CONSPIRATOR-2, CO-CONSPIRATOR-3, and other co-conspirators to suppress and eliminate competition by rigging bids to obtain procurements for sports equipment and related services for schools in Mississippi, in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1. The conspiracy engaged in by the defendant and co-conspirators was a *per se* unlawful, and thus unreasonable, restraint of interstate trade and commerce in violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1.

34. In furtherance of the conspiracy, **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** and co-conspirators did, among other things, the following:

- a. agreed in advance of the bids which co-conspirator would win the bid;
- b. agreed to provide and submit complementary bids (that is, intentionally higher-priced fake bids) to schools;
- c. submitted complementary bids to schools on behalf of COMPANY-6;
- d. received procurements on behalf of COMPANY-6 for school sports equipment and related services where bids were submitted.

35. During the Count 1 relevant period, the business activities of **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** and his co-conspirators that are the subject of the conspiracy charged in Count 1 were within the flow of, and substantially affected, interstate trade and commerce.

All in violation of Title 15, United States Code, Section 1.

COUNT 2 (15 U.S.C. § 1)

36. Paragraphs 1 through 30 are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

37. The relevant period for Count 2 is that period from at least as early as February 2014 through at least as late as August 2021 (“Count 2 relevant period”).

38. During the Count 2 relevant period, in the Southern District of Mississippi and elsewhere, **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** knowingly entered into and engaged in a conspiracy with COMPANY-2, Maurice Daniel Bowering Jr., Robert Tucker Craig, Bradley David Willcutt, CO-CONSPIRATOR-2, CO-CONSPIRATOR-4, CO-CONSPIRATOR-5, CO-CONSPIRATOR-6, CO-CONSPIRATOR-7, CO-CONSPIRATOR-8, CO-CONSPIRATOR-9, and other co-conspirators to suppress and eliminate competition by rigging bids to obtain procurements for sports equipment and related services for schools in Mississippi, in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1. The conspiracy engaged in by the defendant and co-conspirators was a *per se* unlawful, and thus unreasonable, restraint of interstate trade and commerce in violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1.

39. In furtherance of the conspiracy, **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** and co-conspirators did, among other things, the following:

- a. agreed in advance of the bids which co-conspirator would win the bid;
- b. agreed to provide and submit complementary bids (that is, intentionally higher-priced fake bids) to schools;

- c. submitted complementary bids to schools on behalf of COMPANY-6;
- d. received procurements on behalf of COMPANY-6 for school sports equipment and related services where complementary bids were submitted.

40. During the Count 2 relevant period, the business activities of **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** and his co-conspirators that are the subject of the conspiracy charged in Count 2 were within the flow of, and substantially affected, interstate trade and commerce.

All in violation of Title 15, United States Code, Section 1.

COUNT 3 (15 U.S.C. § 1)

41. Paragraphs 1 through 30 are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

42. The relevant period for Count 3 is that period from at least as early as 2006 through at least as late as July 2023 (“Count 3 relevant period”).

43. During the Count 3 relevant period, in the Southern District of Mississippi and elsewhere, **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** knowingly entered into and engaged in a conspiracy with COMPANY-3, COMPANY-4, Maurice Daniel Bowering Jr., Robert Tucker Craig, Robert Douglas Heflin, Bradley David Willcutt, CO-CONSPIRATOR-2, CO-CONSPIRATOR-3, CO-CONSPIRATOR-4, CO-CONSPIRATOR-10, CO-CONSPIRATOR-11, CO-CONSPIRATOR-12, CO-CONSPIRATOR-13, CO-CONSPIRATOR-14, and other co-conspirators to suppress and eliminate competition by rigging bids to obtain procurements for sports equipment and related services for schools in Mississippi, in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1. The conspiracy engaged in by the defendant and co-conspirators was a *per se* unlawful, and thus unreasonable, restraint of interstate trade and commerce in violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1.

44. In furtherance of the conspiracy, **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** and co-conspirators did, among other things, the following:

- a. agreed in advance of the bids which co-conspirator would win the bid;
- b. agreed to provide and submit complementary bids (that is, intentionally higher-priced fake bids) to schools;
- c. submitted complementary bids to schools on behalf of COMPANY-6;
- d. received procurements on behalf of COMPANY-6 for school sports equipment and related services where complementary bids were submitted.

45. During the Count 3 relevant period, the business activities of **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** and his co-conspirators that are the subject of the conspiracy charged in Count 3 were within the flow of, and substantially affected, interstate trade and commerce.

All in violation of Title 15, United States Code, Section 1.

COUNT 4 (15 U.S.C. § 1)

46. Paragraphs 1 through 30 are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

47. The relevant period for Count 4 is that period from at least as early as May 2021 through at least as late as May 2023 (“Count 4 relevant period”).

48. During the Count 4 relevant period, in the Southern District of Mississippi and elsewhere, **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** knowingly entered into and engaged in a conspiracy with COMPANY-5, Maurice Daniel Bowering Jr., Charles Ferrell Trimm, Bradley David Willcutt, CO-CONSPIRATOR-3, and other co-conspirators to suppress and eliminate competition by rigging bids to obtain procurements for sports equipment and related services for schools in Mississippi, in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1. The conspiracy

engaged in by the defendant and co-conspirators was a *per se* unlawful, and thus unreasonable, restraint of interstate trade and commerce in violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1.

49. In furtherance of the conspiracy, **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** and co-conspirators did, among other things, the following:

- a. agreed in advance of the bids which co-conspirator would win the bid;
- b. agreed to provide and submit complementary (that is, intentionally higher-priced fake bids) bids to schools;
- c. submitted complementary bids to schools on behalf of COMPANY-6;
- d. received procurements on behalf of COMPANY-6 for school sports equipment and related services where complementary bids were submitted.

50. During the Count 4 relevant period, the business activities of **WILLIAM RAY SIMPSON** and his co-conspirators that are the subject of the conspiracy charged in Count 4 were within the flow of, and substantially affected, interstate trade and commerce.

All in violation of Title 15, United States Code, Section 1.



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