



**U. S. Department of Justice**

*Jason R. Coody  
United States Attorney  
Northern District of Florida*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**LOCAL PRESIDENT OF “WE BUILD THE WALL”  
SENTENCED TO 51 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON**

**PENSACOLA, FLORIDA** – Brian G. Kolfage, 41, of Miramar Beach, Florida, was sentenced to 51 months in federal prison after previously pleading guilty to crimes charged in the Northern District of Florida relating to the filing of his 2019 federal income taxes, along with a guilty plea to conspiracy to commit wire fraud charges filed by the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York for defrauding donors to “We Build the Wall.” The sentence was announced by Jason R. Coody, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

“The United States relies on the honest payment of taxes to defend our country and maintain its operations,” stated U.S. Attorney Coody. “With the assistance of our dedicated law enforcement partners, we are committed to investigating and prosecuting those who falsely misrepresent their income – whether by traditional evasion or the filing of fraudulent documents to further their criminal schemes. This sentence should serve as a significant deterrent to such illegal conduct.”

Court documents reflect Kolfage pled guilty to three federal charges related to filing false income tax returns for the tax year 2019. With this plea, Kolfage admitted, under oath, that between January 2019 and July 2020, he engaged in a scheme to defraud the United States in relation to his 2019 federal income tax returns. Kolfage admitted illicitly receiving hundreds of thousands of dollars from multiple organizations during 2019, including We Build the Wall, Inc., which were deposited into his personal bank account. Kolfage failed to report this income to the Internal Revenue Service. Upon learning of an investigation into his federal income taxes, Kolfage then filed amended tax returns for 2019 that were also false. These amended tax returns continued to fraudulently fail to report income deriving directly and indirectly from We Build the Wall. Kolfage spent his unreported income on things such as personal boat payments, a luxury SUV, jewelry, and cosmetic surgery.

“Mr. Kolfage deliberately and egregiously side-stepped his legal duty to pay taxes when he devised an elaborate scheme to hide income from his non-profit organization, We Build the Wall,” said IRS-CI Special Agent in Charge Brian Payne. “Kolfage repeatedly falsely claimed he would not take a salary and preyed on the generosity of hundreds of thousands of donors through his vast online fundraising scam. Today’s sentencing should serve as evidence that this type of blatant disregard for the rules and obligations that govern non-profit fundraising will not be tolerated.”

Kolfage’s federal prison sentence will be followed by 3 years supervised release, and he will also be required to pay restitution, to the United States of America, in the amount of \$143,003 for his tax crimes, along with millions of dollars’ worth of forfeiture and restitution for his scheme to defraud We Build the Wall donors.

"Mr. Kolfage deliberately and intentionally preyed on the hearts and pocketbooks of hardworking Americans as a way to fund his own lavish lifestyle," said Sherri E. Onks, Special Agent in Charge of FBI Jacksonville. "The FBI and our law enforcement partners will not tolerate this type of blatant fraud against unwitting donors, and this sentencing should serve as a warning to those who attempt to take advantage of others."

The Northern District of Florida case was investigated by the Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney David L. Goldberg along with prosecutors in the Southern District of New York.

The United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Florida is one of 94 offices that serve as the nation’s principal litigators under the direction of the Attorney General. To access public court documents online, please visit the [U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida](http://www.uscourts.gov) website. For more information about the United States Attorney’s Office, Northern District of Florida, visit <http://www.justice.gov/usao/fln/index.html>.

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