

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

FELONY

BILL OF INFORMATION FOR FOOD STAMP FRAUD

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*

CRIMINAL DOCKET NO.

v.

*

SECTION:

LONG T. TRINH

*

VIOLATION: 7 U.S.C. § 2024(c)

* * *

The United States Attorney charges that:

COUNT 1

1. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), a federal government program formerly known as the Food Stamp Program. SNAP helps qualifying individuals and families buy food.

2. SNAP or food stamp benefits are similar to United States currency in that food stamp recipients can purchase food from grocery retailers at the face value of their food stamp benefits. In most states, food stamp benefits are provided to recipients on an Electronic Benefits Transfer

(EBT) card that is used like a bank Automated Teller Machine (ATM) card. In Louisiana, recipients receive their food stamp benefits through Electronic Benefit Transfers (EBT). The food stamp recipients in Louisiana receive an EBT card known as the "Louisiana Purchase" card.

3. Grocery retailers participate in SNAP only with the authorization of USDA-FNS. Authorized retailers may only accept and redeem food stamp benefits in exchange for the sale of eligible food items. Retailers may not exchange food stamp benefits for cash or any other ineligible items of value such as tobacco products or alcoholic beverages.

4. During the authorization process retailers that participate in SNAP are informed of the prohibitions against accepting food stamp benefits for anything other than eligible food items, and are also notified of the sanctions for prohibited activities, including possible criminal prosecution. When participating in SNAP, authorized grocery retailers agree to be held liable for all actions of their employees regarding federal regulations governing SNAP, including illegal acts or fraud and food stamp trafficking.

5. In or about December 2001, the defendant **LONG T. TRINH** opened a small convenience store which sells seafood named Seafood Heaven, in Gretna, Louisiana, located in the Eastern District of Louisiana. On January 20, 2002, Seafood Heaven became an authorized retailer to accept SNAP benefits.

From December 2009 through January 2013, in the Eastern District of Louisiana, the defendant **LONG T. TRINH**, did knowingly present for payment and redemption, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program benefits issued by the United States Department of Agriculture in the approximate amount of \$2,296,379, which funds had been transferred to and received by the

defendant through the Seafood Heaven bank account at Capitol One, in a manner not authorized by Title 7, United States Code, Chapter 51 and the regulations issued thereto; that is, that said Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits had been purchased by the defendant in exchange for cash money and ineligible items.

All in violation of Title 7, United States Code, Section 2024(c).

NOTICE OF FORFEITURE

1. The allegations of Count 1 of this Bill of Information are realleged and incorporated by reference as though set forth fully herein for the purpose of alleging forfeiture to the United States of America pursuant to the provisions of Title 7, United States Code, Section 2024(f), and Title 18, United States Code, Section 981(a)(1)(C), made applicable through Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c).

2. As a result of the offense alleged in Count 1, the defendant, **LONG T. TRINH**, shall forfeit to the United States pursuant to Title 7, United States Code, Section 2024(f), and Title 18, United States Code, Section 981(a)(1)(C), made applicable through Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), any and all property, real or personal, which constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to a violation of Title 7, United States Code, Section 2024(c).

3. If any of the property subject to forfeiture, as a result of any act or omission of the defendant:

- a. cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;
- b. has been transferred or sold to, or deposited with, a third person;
- c. has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the Court;
- d. has been substantially diminished in value; or

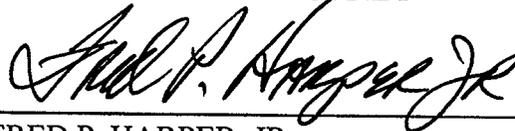
- e. has been commingled with other property which cannot be subdivided without difficulty;

it is the intent of the United States, pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p), to seek forfeiture of any other property of said defendant up to the value of the above forfeitable property.

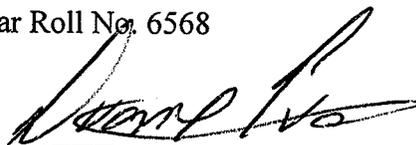
All in violation of Title 7, United States Code, Section 2024(f) and Title 18, United States Code, Section 981(a)(1)(C), made applicable through Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c).



DANA J. BOENTE
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY



FRED P. HARPER, JR.
First Assistant United States Attorney
Bar Roll No. 6568



DUANE A. EVANS
Assistant United States Attorney
Chief, Criminal Division
Bar Roll No. 24086



DOROTHY MANNING TAYLOR
Assistant United States Attorney
Bar Roll No. 12678

New Orleans, Louisiana
September , 2013