



Department of Justice

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22 COUNT RICO INDICTMENT RETURNED

Jacksonville, Florida - United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces the return by a grand jury of an indictment charging Maynard Kenneth Godwin (31), Andrew Chase Wilkie (29), Billy James Harper (29), Jonathan David Hart (29), Eric Steven Ellis (26), and Brock Roger Skov (31), all of Jacksonville, with multiple violations of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1962(c), Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, otherwise known as RICO. If convicted on all counts, the defendants face maximum penalties ranging from twenty (20) years to life in federal prison. The indictment also notifies the defendants that the United States intends to forfeit firearms, cash, and vehicles, which are alleged to be traceable as proceeds of the offenses or as property used to facilitate the offenses.

According to the indictment, the defendants are members of a criminal enterprise known as the Guardians, an organization allegedly responsible for multiple armed home invasion robberies, armed bank robberies, extortion, witness intimidation, possession of illegal firearms, distribution of stolen merchandise, and the distribution of cocaine, oxycodone, and anabolic steroids.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, and the Clay County Sheriff's Office. It will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jay Taylor.