

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## ***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA***

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*For Immediate Release*

### **FORMER DMV EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT BRIBERY AND DOCUMENT FRAUD, BRIBERY AND WITNESS TAMPERING IN A WIDESPREAD CORRUPTION CASE AT THE DMV IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

#### **NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY** – January 29, 2014

United States Attorney Laura E. Duffy announced that Jeffrey Bednarek, a former employee at the California Department of Motor Vehicles (“DMV”) in El Cajon, California, pleaded guilty late yesterday to his aggravated role in a conspiracy to commit bribery and identification document fraud, bribery, and witness tampering. Bednarek entered his guilty plea before U.S. Magistrate Judge William V. Gallo.

According to the plea agreement, Bednarek was a Licensing Registration Examiner at the El Cajon DMV who was responsible for conducting driving tests for driver’s license applicants. Bednarek admitted that, beginning in at least April 2009, and continuing up to at least April 26, 2012, he conspired with his co-defendants to commit federal program bribery and identification document fraud.

Bednarek admitted that he falsely entered “passing” scores for both written and behind-the-wheel

tests for applicants who applied for regular (Class C) and commercial (Class A) driver's licenses in exchange for bribes. Bednarek also acknowledged that he directed others to enter false "passing" test scores and that he created false driving test score sheets to create the appearance that the applicant had completed the test. Bednarek said in his plea agreement that during the conspiracy, he produced more than 100 fraudulent driver's permits and licenses, and that applicants paid more than \$50,000 in total bribes for permits and licenses that he fraudulently produced.

While awaiting an upcoming trial that was scheduled for December 2, 2013, Bednarek tampered with one of the Government's witnesses, the plea agreement said. According to court documents, Bednarek was arrested on November 13, 2013 a complaint for witness tampering. On November 22, 2013, U.S. District Judge Cathy A. Bencivengo ordered that Bednarek be detained pending trial. Bednarek admitted in his plea agreement that between January 26, 2013 and November 4, 2013, he knowingly attempted to corruptly persuade a Government witness to alter his testimony, namely, to provide false testimony regarding cash bribes that Bednarek had received for his aggravating role in the conspiracy. Bednarek admitted that he intended to prevent and influence the Government witness's testimony in the trial that was scheduled for December 2, 2013.

Of the 30 defendants charged in this widespread corruption scheme (related Criminal Case Nos. 12CR1852-CAB and 13CR0592-CAB), all 30 of the defendants, including Bednarek, have pleaded guilty to felony conduct, namely, conspiracy to commit bribery and identification document fraud. Many of these defendants have been sentenced, and several others are currently awaiting sentencing.

Bednarek is next scheduled to be in court before United States District Judge Cathy A. Bencivengo for sentencing on April 25, 2014, at 9:00 a.m.

These cases are the result of an active, ongoing criminal investigation. Anyone with information about corruption at the DMV is asked to contact the Federal Bureau of Investigation at 1-877-NO-BRIBE (662-7423), or the DMV's Investigations Branch-Office of Internal Affairs at 626-851-0173.

**DEFENDANT**

**Criminal Case No. 12CR1852-CAB**

Jeffrey T. Bednarek

**SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

Count 1: Title 18, United States Code, Section 371 -- Conspiracy to Commit Bribery and to Produce Unauthorized Identification Documents -- statutory maximum sentence of 5 years' custody, a maximum fine of \$250,000, special assessment of \$100, and a maximum term of supervised release of 3 years.

Count 2: Title 18, United States Code, Section 666(a)(1)(B) -- Bribery -- statutory maximum sentence of 10 years' custody, special assessment of \$100, and a maximum term of supervised release of 3 years.

Count 7: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1512(b)(1) -- Witness Tampering -- statutory maximum sentence of 20 years' custody, a maximum fine of \$250,000, special assessment of \$100, and a maximum term of supervised release of 3 years.

**INVESTIGATING AGENCIES**

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Department of Motor Vehicles – Investigations Division