

PRESS RELEASE

Drug Trafficker Pleads Guilty to Identity Theft and Attempting to Steal Seized Cars from the FBI Using Fake Court Documents

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of California

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Quinten Giovanni Moody, aka Christano Rossi, 38, of Dublin, pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to distribute marijuana, aggravated identity theft, and obstruction of justice, U.S. Attorney Phillip A. Talbert announced.

According to court documents, between June 2017 and June 2022, Moody, co-defendant Myra Boleche Minks, 44, formerly of Roseville, and other co-conspirators generated hundreds of thousands of dollars by transporting marijuana from California to Georgia, Nevada, Texas, and other locations. Moody and others bought marijuana in California and then transported the marijuana to distributors in other states via couriers and baggage traveling on commercial airplanes and commercial shipping services. Once the marijuana was sold, Moody and others caused the proceeds of the marijuana sales to be returned to them in California by using couriers to travel on commercial airline flights carrying cash, using shipping services to ship cash, and causing others at their direction to deposit cash into bank accounts.

Moody and others also committed unemployment insurance fraud during the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in August 2020, Moody, Minks, and co-defendant Jessica Tang, 49, of Sacramento, participated in a scheme to submit fraudulent claims of unemployment benefits through the California Department of Employment Development (EDD). As part of this scheme, on Sept. 4, 2020, Moody used a Bank of America debit card in the name of an identity theft victim to make purchases at a Cartier store and Louis Vuitton store in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Moody sought to obstruct the investigation into his activities by using faked court documents. As part of the investigation, the United States applied for seizure warrants

for a 1969 Chevrolet Camaro and a 1956 Chevrolet pickup that Moody purchased with the proceeds of his criminal activities. On April 15, 2022, personnel from the Federal Bureau of Investigation seized the two vehicles in Georgia pursuant to the seizure warrants issued in the Eastern District of California. The vehicles were transported to the FBI's Atlanta Field Office for storage. On May 8, 2022, at approximately 9:30 p.m., a flatbed truck from towing company arrived at the FBI's Atlanta field office. The tow truck driver informed FBI security personnel that he had been directed to retrieve the vehicles from FBI's custody. The tow truck driver gave FBI security personnel documents, including a document purporting to be an order issued by the Honorable John K. Larkins III, U.S. Magistrate Judge for the Northern District of Georgia. The documents purported to order the U.S. Marshal and the FBI to release the vehicles. The documents, however, were fraudulent and had been created by Moody and Minks for the purpose of fraudulently obtaining custody of the two seized vehicles.

On May 21, 2022, a tow truck from a different towing company arrived at the FBI's Atlanta field office. Again, the driver presented a fake federal court order purporting to authorize the release of the seized vehicles. The fraudulent federal court documents had been altered from the previous attempt. FBI personnel did not release the vehicles. Shortly before the arrival of the tow truck, a co-conspirator called personnel at the FBI's Atlanta field office and pretended to be an FBI Special Agent. While in character, the co-conspirator attempted to contact the employees assigned to the gate outside of the field office to facilitate the tow truck gaining access to the FBI property.

Charges are pending against Minks and Tang. The charges are only allegations; the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Moody is scheduled to be sentenced by U.S. District Judge John A. Mendez on July 11, 2023. Moody faces a maximum statutory penalty of 40 years in prison and a fine up to \$5 million for the marijuana distribution conspiracy. He faces a maximum sentence of two years in prison consecutive to any other term of incarceration and a fine of up to \$250,000 for the aggravated identity theft count, and he faces up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000 for the obstruction of justice count. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of any applicable statutory factors and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables.

This case was the product of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration, California Highway Patrol, Placer County Sheriff's Office, Placer County Probation Department, San Mateo County Sheriff's Department, Colma Police Department, Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority Police

Department, Roseville Police Department, San Francisco Police Department, Atlanta Police Department, U.S. Department of Labor – Office of Inspector General, and the California Employment Development Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney Justin Lee, and Sam Stefanki are prosecuting the case.

This case is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a program bringing together all levels of law enforcement and the communities they serve to reduce violent crime and gun violence, and to make our neighborhoods safer for everyone. On May 26, 2021, the U.S. Department of Justice launched a violent crime reduction strategy strengthening PSN based on these core principles: fostering trust and legitimacy in our communities, supporting community-based organizations that help prevent violence from occurring in the first place, setting focused and strategic enforcement priorities, and measuring the results.

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