

Final Co-Conspirator Sentenced to Prison for COVID-19 Fraud Scheme

Thursday, September 7, 2023

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona

TUCSON, Ariz. – Patrick Green, 48, of Longview, Texas, was sentenced last week by United States District Judge John C. Hinderaker to 14 months in federal prison and ordered to pay \$226,146 in restitution. Green pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Wire Fraud.

Green was the final co-conspirator to be sentenced in this case. Jonathan Blake, 30, of Tucson, Arizona, and Bethany Helene Green, 46, of Longview, Texas, also pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud in this case. In early August, Judge Hinderaker sentenced Blake to six months in prison, and sentenced Bethany Green to 37 months in prison. All three co-defendants are responsible for, and ordered to pay, \$226,146 in restitution.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, to offset employees' lost wages, the federal government added \$600 per week in federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) to the states' standard unemployment payments. In May 2020, shortly after this government relief was announced, Bethany Green devised a fraudulent scheme to apply for Arizona unemployment assistance and the additional PUA funds on behalf of inmates at the Pima County Jail who were not entitled to receive unemployment payments. Bethany Green conspired with inmates at the jail, including her husband, Patrick Green, and another inmate, Jonathan Blake, to apply for benefits on their behalf. Patrick Green and Jonathan Blake also recruited other inmates to the scheme. A total of 16 inmates provided their personal identifying information which Bethany Green then used online to fraudulently apply and obtain unemployment benefits for the inmates. Bethany Green charged the inmates a fee, typically \$1,000, to complete the online unemployment applications. Bethany Green then charged the inmates an additional weekly fee of \$100 to file the weekly certifications necessary to continue the unemployment payments. In total, Bethany Green and her co-conspirators defrauded the Arizona Department of Economic Security of \$226,146 in false unemployment claims.

United States Department of Labor-Office of Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security-Office of Inspector General, and Arizona Department of Economic Security-Office of Inspector General conducted the investigation in this case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Mary Sue Feldmeier, District of

Arizona, Tucson, handled the prosecution.

CASE NUMBER: CR-22-01664-TUC-JCH (BGM)-1

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