



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Manager of Clothing Factory Indicted for Offering Bribe to Federal Labor Investigator in Exchange for Closing Wage Investigation**

*LOS ANGELES* – A federal grand jury today indicted the general manager of a La Puente garment factory on charges of offering to pay bribes to an investigator with the United States Department of Labor in exchange for the investigator closing an investigation into wage violations.

Howard Quoc Trinh, 41, of Arcadia, the manager of Seven-Bros Enterprises, is accused in the indictment of bribery of a public official.

The indictment charges Trinh with offering to pay \$10,000 in bribes to a Department of Labor Wage and Hour investigator.

The indictment also alleges that Trinh offered the bribe last month to secure the release of a hold known as a “Hot Goods” objection that had been placed on a shipment by the investigator.

As part of the bribery scheme, Trinh actually paid the investigator \$3,000, according to a criminal complaint previously filed in this case.

According to the affidavit in support of that complaint, the investigator was investigating Seven-Bros for violating the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which sets standards for minimum wage and overtime pay. The Labor Department Wage and Hour investigator led a team that conducted an unannounced visit to Seven-Bros on March 10. The investigation into wage violations covered a period from May 2012 through March 10, 2015, and found that Seven-Bros owed approximately \$100,000 to compensate employees for FLSA violations over that period. According to the affidavit, the investigator returned to Seven-Bros on March 18, at which time Trinh said he did not owe his employees any back wages and that he wanted to “take care” of the investigator.

In response to Trinh’s statements, the Labor Department’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) initiated an investigation and outfitted the investigator with recording equipment. On the evening of March 18, during a recorded meeting, Trinh allegedly

offered the investigator \$10,000 to close out the investigation without finding any violations and to lift the Hot Goods objection.

The next day, during another recorded meeting, Trinh gave the investigator an initial payment of \$3,000 in a manila envelope, according to the affidavit.

The criminal complaint was filed on March 20, and Trinh was arrested by OIG special agents. At his initial court appearance, Trinh was ordered released on a \$200,000 bond and was ordered to appear for an arraignment on April 17.

*An indictment contains allegations that a defendant has committed a crime. Every defendant is presumed to be innocent until proven guilty in court.*

If he is convicted of the bribery count in the indictment, Trinh would face a statutory maximum sentence of 15 years in federal prison.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations.