

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, June 21, 2019

**Seven Maryland Residents Charged in Connection with
Computer Fraud and Identity Theft Ring That Targeted State
Governments**

ALBANY, NEW YORK – A federal grand jury has indicted Jason “J.R.” Trowbridge, age 40; Guy Cuomo, age 51; Robin Chapin, age 61; Anna Hardy, age 66; and Shamair Brison, age 33, all of Frederick, Maryland; and Rebecca Fogle, age 25, of Woodsboro, Maryland, and Sarah Bromfield, age 39, of Hagerstown, Maryland, in connection with their alleged roles in a scheme to obtain unauthorized access to information from state government computers in order to sell this information to debt collectors.

The announcement was made by United States Attorney Grant C. Jaquith and Michael C. Mikulka, Special Agent in Charge, New York Region, United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

The indictment charges the defendants with conspiracy to commit computer fraud, accessing a protected computer and obtaining information for commercial advantage and private financial gain, and aggravated identity theft.

The defendants operated or were employed by Paymerica Corporation, a Maryland-based company involved in researching place-of-employment information to assist debt collectors. According to the indictment, the defendants conspired to gain unauthorized access to computers used by state governments in New York and other states for processing unemployment insurance applications. Members of the conspiracy created user accounts in the names of their victims, without the victims' authorization, to obtain information about the victims' current employers. The defendants then sold this information to third-party debt collectors seeking to collect money from the victims, including by garnishing the victims' wages.

The charges in the indictment are merely accusations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

If convicted, Trowbridge faces a mandatory 2-year term of imprisonment on the aggravated identity theft charges and up to 10 years in prison on the remaining charges. If convicted, Cuomo, Chapin, Hardy, and Brison each face a mandatory 2-year term of imprisonment on the aggravated identity theft charges and up to 5 years in prison on the remaining charges. A defendant's sentence is imposed by a judge based on the particular statute the defendant is charged with violating, the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, and other factors.

The case is being investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, with assistance from the New York State Department of Labor, Office of Special Investigations, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Wayne A. Myers and Joshua R. Rosenthal.