

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Central District of Illinois

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

Springfield Woman Indicted on Charges of Fraud Related to Small Business Administration COVID-19 Disaster Loan Program

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – A grand jury today returned an indictment that charges a Springfield, Ill., woman, Amber L. Bolen, 41, with fraud in connection with major disaster or emergency benefits available through the Small Business Administration.

The indictment alleges that in July 2020, Bolen, of the 1900 block of Gregory Ct., submitted an application for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan for a business, known as “amber bolen,” which did not exist. The indictment alleges that Bolen made false representations on the loan application including that she owned the business, listed at the same address as her residential address, since 2013; that it was engaged in the transportation industry; and, that the business employed 11 people and had gross revenues of more than \$90,000 for the 12 months prior to Jan. 31, 2020. The SBA wired approximately \$41,000 in loan proceeds into Bolen’s bank account.

If convicted, the maximum statutory penalty for fraud in connection with major disaster or emergency benefits is up to 30 years in prison; the maximum penalty for wire fraud is up to 20 years in prison.

The charges were investigated by the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division as part of a Central Illinois Task Force directed at combatting COVID-19 related fraud. Other participating agencies in the task force include the Small Business Administration, Office of Inspector General; U.S. Secret Service; Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Office of Inspector General; U.S. Postal Inspection Service; U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General; and, the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Sierra Senor-Moore is representing the government in the case prosecution.

Covid-19 disaster relief and enhanced unemployment benefits are intended to help people and businesses suffering as a result of the pandemic. If members of the public suspect anyone fraudulently obtained or misused benefits, they should contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud (NDCF) Hotline at 1-866-720-5721 or submit the NDCF Web Complaint Form. The NDCF is a national coordinating agency within the Department of Justice’s Criminal Division dedicated to improving the detection, prevention, investigation, and prosecution of criminal conduct related to natural and man-made disasters and other emergencies, such as the coronavirus (COVID-19). Hotline staff will obtain information regarding complaints, which will then be reviewed by law enforcement officials. More information is available at <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud>

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

Topic(s):
Coronavirus
Financial Fraud

Component(s):
[USAO - Illinois, Central](#)