

Fayette County Auto Dealer Sentenced to Prison for COVID-19 Relief Fraud

Thursday, February 15, 2024

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Pennsylvania

PITTSBURGH, Pa. – A resident of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, was sentenced in federal court on February 14, 2024, for conspiracy to commit mail and bank fraud, U.S. Attorney Eric G. Olshan announced today.

United States Senior District Judge Arthur J. Schwab sentenced Joshua DeWitt, 38, to ten months of imprisonment followed by two years of supervised release. DeWitt was also ordered to pay restitution in the total amount of \$60,022.50.

According to information provided to the Court, DeWitt was the owner of RC Auto, a used car dealership in Fayette County. Along with his co-conspirator Terrence Newmeyer, DeWitt filed a series of fraudulent applications for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) COVID-19 relief loans, including on behalf of customers, telling some that they were applying for funds that could be used to purchase a vehicle from the dealership. DeWitt and Newmeyer used the fraudulently obtained pandemic benefits for themselves and the dealership, by—among other things—accepting them as payment for vehicles and services sold.

Prior to imposing sentence, Judge Schwab stated that the fraud conspiracy lasted for many months and involved repeated instances of criminal activity.

Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey Bengel prosecuted this case on behalf of the government.

United States Attorney Olshan commended the United States Department of Labor Office of the Inspector General, Pennsylvania State Police, and Fayette County District Attorney's Office for the investigation leading to the successful prosecution of DeWitt.

Newmeyer's sentencing hearing currently is scheduled for March 5, 2024.

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