

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Nevada

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Las Vegas Woman Indicted For Using Over 40 Stolen Identities To Collect \$170,000 In Unemployment Insurance

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – A Las Vegas woman was arrested and arraigned Wednesday in federal court in connection to a 13-count indictment for using more than 40 stolen identities to collect \$170,000 in fraudulent unemployment insurance benefits, announced United States Attorney Nicholas A. Trutanich for the District of Nevada.

Danielle Lacharis Buck, aka “Danielle Lacharis Lakey,” 42, was charged with three counts of mail fraud, four counts of wire fraud, one count of using an unauthorized access device, and five counts of aggravated identity theft. United States Magistrate Judge Carl W. Hoffman scheduled a trial date for August 12, 2019.

According to allegations in the indictment, which was unsealed yesterday, from about September 2010 to April 2019, Buck participated in a scheme to defraud the California Employment Development Department (EDD) into paying her more than \$170,000 in unemployment insurance benefits. As part of the scheme, Buck fraudulently obtained personal identifying information, such as names, dates of birth, and social security numbers of unsuspecting individuals, and then electronically filed false unemployment claims using the stolen names and information. She filed more than 50 false unemployment insurance claims using more than 40 different identities. When EDD approved one of Buck's false claims, Bank of America mailed her an electronic benefits payment debit card loaded with unemployment insurance benefits. Buck then used the debit card to withdraw the benefits in the form of cash from ATMs in the Las Vegas and Los Angeles metropolitan areas.

The EDD is the administrator of the federally funded unemployment insurance benefit program for residents of the State of California.

If convicted, the maximum penalty is 160 years in prison.

The case was investigated by the Department of Labor-Office of the Inspector General and the California Employment Development Department. Assistant United States Attorney Tony Lopez is prosecuting the case.

Charges contained in an indictment are merely allegations, and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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