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## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

# **No Amount Too Small, No Fraud Too Large — And Counting: Fake Identities, Fake Businesses, Real Prison Time — The DOL OIG Continues Its Relentless War on Fraud**

May 21, 2026

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — This week the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General led by Inspector General Anthony P. D’Esposito tackled vicious fraud from all angles, securing significant victories and long overdue justice. The American people deserve the guarantee that their hard-earned tax dollars are going toward the benefits and programs they were intended for — supporting the citizens who are entitled to them. Through these efforts alongside Vice President J.D. Vance’s Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, we are restoring accountability and rebuilding public trust. “Fraud is a tax on every American family — a tax they never voted for and one we will no longer tolerate,” said Anthony P. D’Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor.

**HARRISBURG, PA.** — A resident of Los Angeles, California, Brian R. Cleland, was sentenced to 120 months in prison for conspiracy to launder monetary instruments in the amount of approximately \$46.4 million. He and other co-conspirators conspired to obtain state unemployment compensation funds, and other public funds, through fraudulent means. This was a joint investigation with the FBI. “Brian Cleland and his co-conspirators stole millions from struggling Americans during a national emergency — hiding behind fake businesses while robbing the American people of crucial unemployment benefits and other public funds. Deplorable schemes like this end now,” said Anthony P. D’Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor. “Let this sentence serve as a warning to those who attempt to exploit taxpayer funded programs, The Office of Inspector General,

our law enforcement partners, and Vice President Vance’s Task Force to Eliminate Fraud — will find you, investigate you, and hold you accountable to the highest extent of the law.”

**TAMPA, FL.** — An illegal alien from Honduras, Nidia Roxana Maradiaga-Flores, was sentenced to 2 years and 2 months in federal prison for aggravated identity theft, false representation of a Social Security number, and making a false claim of U.S. citizenship for employment purposes. This was a joint investigation with Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Department of Transportation OIG, Social Security Administration OIG, U.S. Border Patrol, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office. “Those who brazenly steal American identities and fraudulently claim U.S. citizenship to seize jobs rightfully belonging to American workers will be hunted down and brought to justice without hesitation. The Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, along with our partners at Homeland Security Investigations, Border Patrol, and local law enforcement, will relentlessly pursue and prosecute individuals who undermine the integrity of our workforce and steal opportunities from American workers,” said Inspector General D’Esposito.

**ROCKFORD, IL.** — An Illinois man, Absalom Hall, was sentenced to 3 years in federal prison for fraudulently obtaining COVID relief loans and assisting in the preparation of false tax returns. The judge also entered a judgment against Hall of \$85,401 and ordered him to pay \$30,866 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This was a joint investigation with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and IRS Criminal Investigation. “Absalom Hall tried to cheat the system, shamelessly exploiting a national crisis and taxpayer-funded programs for personal gain. Let this stand as a clear warning: Those who commit fraud against the American people will find no refuge,” said Inspector General D’Esposito. “We will not rest until every individual who commits these reprehensible acts are exposed, prosecuted, and faces the severe consequences they deserve.”

No amount too small, no fraud too large — and counting.

For additional information on DOL OIG, please visit [oig.dol.gov](https://oig.dol.gov). If you suspect wrongdoing involving DOL programs or operations, contact the DOL-OIG Hotline at (800) 347-3756 or [oig.dol.gov/hotlinecontact.htm](https://oig.dol.gov/hotlinecontact.htm).

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**For Media Inquiries:**

Stone.Olivia@oig.dol.gov  
(202) 693-7100

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