

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Northern District of Indiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, August 30, 2016

Six Additional Indiana/Kentucky/Ohio Regional Council of Carpenters Union Members Charged

With Health Care Theft

HAMMOND – United States Attorney for the Northern District of Indiana, David A. Capp, announced that six additional members of the Indiana/Kentucky/Ohio Regional Council of Carpenters were each charged by Information with one count of health care theft.

According to the documents filed in this case, members of the Indiana/Kentucky/Ohio Regional Council of Carpenters illegally gained assets from the Indiana/Kentucky/Ohio Regional Council of Carpenters Welfare Fund, a union health care benefit program. The defendants requested reimbursement of medical expenses by submitting to the carpenter's welfare fund a fraudulent claim form and a copy of an un-negotiated personal check for reimbursement. These documents gave the appearance that the defendants had paid a reimbursable health care expense. Claims were processed from the union welfare fund reimbursing the defendants for these health care expenses that were never actually incurred. Those who have been charged are as follows:

- Ryan Cundiff, 40, of Crown Point, Indiana
- Brian Ellis, 46, of Hobart, Indiana
- Christopher LeBell, 36, of Cedar Lake, Indiana
- Aaron Merkel, 36, of Valparaiso, Indiana
- Eric Murray, 37, of Williamsburg, Ohio
- Daniel Rehfeldt, 49, of Hobart, Indiana

This case was investigated by the United States Department of Labor, Office of the Inspector General and the Employee Benefits Security Administration. This case was handled by Assistant United States Attorney Gary T. Bell.

The United States Attorney's Office emphasized that an Information is merely an allegation and that all persons charged are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.

If convicted in court, any specific sentence to be imposed will be determined by the judge after a consideration of federal sentencing statutes and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines.

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