

PRESS RELEASE

Two Former Missouri Health Care Charity Executives Sentenced for Roles in Multimillion-Dollar Bribery and Embezzlement Scheme

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For Immediate Release

Office of Public Affairs

Two former executives of a Springfield, Missouri-based charity were sentenced for their roles in a multimillion-dollar public corruption scheme that involved embezzlement and bribes paid to multiple elected public officials in the State of Arkansas.

Bontiea Bernedette Goss, 65, was sentenced today to three years in prison, and her husband, Tommy “Tom” Ray Goss, 68, was sentenced on April 25 to six years in prison. They were also ordered to jointly pay \$4.35 million in forfeiture and/or restitution.

According to court documents, Bontiea and Tom Goss were the former chief operating officer and chief financial officer, respectively, at Preferred Family Healthcare Inc., a charity that provided a variety of services to individuals in Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Illinois. Some of these services included mental and behavioral health treatment and counseling, substance abuse treatment and counseling, employment assistance, aid to individuals with developmental disabilities, and medical services. In exchange for the bribes and kickbacks offered and paid by the Gosses and their co-conspirators, elected state officials in Arkansas provided favorable legislative and official action for the charity, including, but not limited to, influencing legislation that would impact the charity and directing funds from the State’s General Improvement Fund.

In September 2022, both Bontiea and Tom Goss [pleaded guilty](#) to conspiracy to pay bribes and kickbacks to elected officials in Arkansas. Tom Goss also pleaded guilty to participating in the conspiracy by embezzling funds from the charity and to one count of aiding and assisting in the preparation and presentation of a false tax return.

In 2022, Preferred Family Healthcare also agreed to pay more than \$8 million in forfeiture and restitution to the federal government and the State of Arkansas under the terms of a non-prosecution agreement, which acknowledged the criminal conduct of its former officers and employees.

As part of this long-running, multi-jurisdiction federal investigation, additional former executives from the charity, former members of the Arkansas state legislature, and others have pleaded guilty in federal court, including the following:

- Former CEO Marilyn Luann Nolan, of Springfield, Missouri, [pleaded guilty in November 2018](#) to her role in a conspiracy to embezzle and misapply the funds of a charitable organization that received federal funds.
- Former Director of Operations and Executive Vice President Robin Raveendran, of Little Rock, Arkansas, [pleaded guilty in June 2019](#) to conspiracy to commit bribery concerning programs receiving federal funds.
- Former Executive and Head of Clinical Operations Keith Fraser Noble, of Rogersville, Missouri, [pleaded guilty in September 2019](#) to concealment of a known felony.
- Former employee and Head of Operations and Lobbying in Arkansas Milton Russell Cranford, also known as Rusty, of Rogers, Arkansas, was sentenced to seven years in prison after pleading guilty to one count of federal program bribery.
- Political consultant Donald Andrew Jones, also known as D.A. Jones, of Willingboro, New Jersey, [pleaded guilty in December 2017](#) to his role in a conspiracy from April 2011 to January 2017 to steal from an organization that receives federal funds.
- Former Arkansas State Senator Jeremy Hutchinson, of Little Rock, pursuant to a global plea agreement, pleaded guilty on June 25, 2019 in the Eastern District of Arkansas to filing a false tax return; pleaded guilty on June 25, 2019, to an information filed in the Western District of Arkansas to conspiracy to commit federal program bribery; and pleaded guilty in the Western District of Missouri on July 8, 2019, to conspiracy to commit federal program bribery. Hutchinson was [sentenced](#) to eight years in prison.
- Former Arkansas State Representative Eddie Wayne Cooper, of Melbourne, Arkansas, [pleaded guilty in February 2018](#) to conspiracy to embezzle more than \$4 million from Preferred Family Healthcare.
- Former Arkansas State Senator and State Representative Henry "Hank" Wilkins IV pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit federal program bribery and devising a scheme and artifice to defraud and deprive the citizens of the State of Arkansas

of their right to honest services. Wilkins was [sentenced](#) to one year and one day in prison.

Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Nicole M. Argentieri, head of the Justice Department's Criminal Division; U.S. Attorney Teresa A. Moore for the Western District of Missouri; U.S. Attorney Jonathan D. Ross for the Eastern District of Arkansas; U.S. Attorney David Clay Fowlkes for the Western District of Arkansas; Special Agent in Charge Thomas F. Murdock of the IRS Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI) St. Louis Field Office; Assistant Director Michael Nordwall of the FBI's Criminal Investigative Division; Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz of the Justice Department Office of Inspector General; Special Agent in Charge William J. Hannah of the Justice Department Office of the Inspector General, Midwest Region; Inspector General Larry D. Turner of the Department of Labor Office of Inspector General; and Assistant Inspector General for Investigations Shimon R. Richmond of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Office of Inspector General made the announcement.

IRS-CI, FBI, and the Offices of the Inspectors General from the Departments of Justice, Labor, and FDIC investigated the cases.

Acting Deputy Chief Marco A. Palmieri and Trial Attorneys Jacob Steiner and Aaron Jennen of the Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section; Supervisory Assistant U.S. Attorney Randall Eggert for the Western District of Missouri; Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephanie Mazzanti for the Eastern District of Arkansas; and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Ben Wulff and Steven M. Mohlhenrich for the Western District of Arkansas are prosecuting the cases.

Updated April 29, 2024

Topic

PUBLIC CORRUPTION

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