

Subcontractor Pleads Guilty to Conspiracy to Bribe General Services Administration Official

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Maryland

Greenbelt, Maryland – A Mt. Airy, Maryland, man pled guilty to conspiring to bribe a U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) official, wire fraud in connection with an Economic Injury Disaster Loan, and possession of a machine gun with an obliterated serial number.

According to court documents, Christopher Brackins, 51, conspired to bribe Public Official A, a former GSA contracting officer's representative. GSA is a federal agency that manages federal property. Brackins owned a general construction company that performed subcontracting work on GSA projects.

Kelly O. Hayes, U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced the guilty plea with Matthew R. Galeotti, Head of the Justice Department's (DOJ) Criminal Division; Deputy Inspector General Robert Erickson, GSA Office of Inspector General (GSA-OIG); Special Agent in Charge William J. DelBagno of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Baltimore Field Office; Acting Inspector General Steven A. Stebbins, U.S. Department of Defense Office of Inspector General (DOD-OIG); and Inspector General Joseph V. Cuffari, Ph.D., U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General (DHS-OIG).

As outlined in court documents, between 2018 and 2021, Brackins provided approximately \$50,000 worth of money and other things of value to Public Official A in exchange for Public Official A's role in directing GSA projects to Brackins's company. For example, in late 2018, as part of the bribery scheme, Brackins paid a fraudulently inflated bonus to one of his employees. Brackins then directed the employee to pay Public Official A \$8,000 in cash from the fraudulently inflated bonus check. Similarly, in early 2021, Brackins paid Public Official A \$25,000, at Public Official A's direction, using an intermediary who accepted the payments through the intermediary's air-conditioning repair business. The defendant and his company earned an estimated \$133,413 in profits from this scheme.

Brackins pled guilty to conspiracy to commit bribery of a federal public official. He faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison followed by up to three years of supervised release. Brackins also pled guilty to wire fraud and possession of a machine gun, which carry a maximum penalty of 20 years and

10 years in prison, respectively, and up to three years of supervised release each. U.S. District Judge Deborah L. Boardman has scheduled sentencing for Wednesday, September 10, at 2 p.m.

Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties. A federal district court judge determines sentencing after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

U.S. Attorney Hayes commended the GSA-OIG, FBI, DOD-OIG, and DHS-OIG for their work in the investigation. Ms. Hayes also thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Joel Crespo and DOJ Trial Attorney Jonathan E. Jacobson who are prosecuting the federal case.

For more information about the Maryland U.S. Attorney's Office, its priorities, and resources available to help the community, visit www.justice.gov/usao-md and <https://www.justice.gov/usao-md/community-outreach>.

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