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WESTERN DISTRICT *of* MICHIGAN

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Thursday, February 28, 2019

Four Lansing Men Sentenced In Food Stamp Fraud Case

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN - United States Attorney Andrew Birge announced today that four Lansing-area men have been sentenced in connection with convictions arising out of a USDA investigation into fraud at convenience stores in Lansing, Michigan, where customers were allowed to buy prohibited items (such as cigarettes) or receive cash in exchange for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits (also known as food stamps).

Raymond Gedeon, Edward Gedeon, and Youssef El-Chaer were convicted of conspiracy to defraud the United States in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371. Raymond Gedeon and Edward Gedeon were each sentenced to 24 months' custody and two years of supervised release. Raymond Gedeon was ordered to pay restitution of more than \$485,000. Edward Gedeon was ordered to pay restitution of more than \$241,000. El-Chaer was ordered to pay restitution of more than \$39,000. Elias Abudaya was convicted of food stamp fraud in violation of 7 U.S.C. § 2024(b) and sentenced to six months' incarceration and restitution of more than \$241,000.

"My office will aggressively prosecute individuals who attempt to defraud taxpayer-funded programs, such as those designed to assist members of our community in need," U.S. Attorney Birge said.

USDA Special Agent-in-Charge Anthony V. Mohatt said, "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program helps put healthy food on the table of 1.3 million Michigan residents each month. The criminal activities of the store owners and employees targeted during this investigation deprived needy citizens of the Lansing area access to nutritious meals. The USDA Office of Inspector General will continue to target those who prey on federal food assistance programs, and their recipients."



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The case was jointly investigated by the USDA Office of Inspector General and the FBI Lansing Resident Office. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Sally J. Berens and Nils Kessler prosecuted the case.

END

Component(s):

USAO - Michigan, Western

Updated March 1, 2019

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