



Department of Justice

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Indianapolis Man Indicted for Money Laundering funds from Elderly Victims

LEXINGTON, Ky. – An Indianapolis man was indicted Thursday for conspiring to launder money illegally obtained from victims of elder financial exploitation.

A federal grand jury in Lexington returned an indictment charging 33-year-old Ismaila Fafunmi, a Nigerian national who is a lawful permanent resident of the United States, with one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering.

According to court records, a female victim living in the Eastern District of Kentucky met an individual on an online dating website, and was eventually defrauded into believing she was in a romantic relationship with a member of the United States military, who was stationed abroad. Through the course of their online communications, the perpetrator convinced the victim to send him money, electronics, and other items, to give him access to her bank accounts online, and to obtain a home equity line of credit to pay for his separation fee from the military. In total, she lost approximately \$200,000 at the direction of her supposed online companion.

These same records indicated there was another female victim, who was defrauded into believing a friend on Facebook had pointed her to an opportunity to win a grant. She sent approximately \$183,000 at the direction of the perpetrators, believing these up-front costs would lead to her award of the grant money.

According to the indictment, a portion of this money was either sent to Fafunmi himself, through the mail, or to individuals he recruited to receive money in bank accounts he had them set up, in and around the Indianapolis area.

This case is being prosecuted as part of the Department of Justice's efforts to identify and prosecute those persons who facilitate elder financial exploitation. The Department of Justice's Elder Justice Mission, being carried out through the Kentucky Elder Justice Task Force, is to seek justice for victims of elder financial exploitation. Anyone who knows someone who may be a victim of an elder financial exploitation, is encouraged to contact law enforcement.

Robert M. Duncan, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky, and James Robert Brown, Jr., Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, jointly announced the indictment.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The indictment was presented to the grand jury by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kathryn M. Anderson.

A date for the defendant to appear in court has not yet been scheduled. The defendant faces up to twenty years in prison for the money laundering conspiracy and a maximum fine of \$500,000. However, any sentence following a conviction would be imposed by the Court after consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal statutes.

Any indictment is an accusation only. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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