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Public Affairs
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TELEMARKETERS ARRESTED ON CHARGES OF DEFRAUDING ELDERLY VICTIMS

PHOENIX – On Oct. 23, 2018 a federal grand jury in Phoenix returned a 24-count indictment for violations of the federal mail fraud statute, and for conspiracy to violate the mail and wire fraud statutes, against: Brandon Trevor Ball, 46, of Phoenix, Ariz.; Trevor Wesley Gabler, 28, of Phoenix, Ariz.; Gordon Lynn Hardy, 55, of Chandler, Ariz.; Jackie Nikiel Whitley, 37, of Phoenix, Ariz.; and Brian Lee Gibson, 36, of Tempe, Ariz.

The indictment alleges that the five defendants worked together in a telemarketing operation to defraud elderly consumers of over \$1 million. In particular, the indictment alleges that when speaking via telephone with the victims, the defendants and their employees used false names and misrepresented the nature of a purported investment opportunity and the location of the business. All defendants were arrested and arraigned yesterday. Defendants Gabler, Ball, Hardy and Gibson have been temporarily detained pending a detention hearing.

“The Secret Service is committed to aggressively investigating financial crimes cases,” said Special Agent in Charge Cristina Beloud of the Secret Service Phoenix Field Office. “This case highlights our outstanding relationship with the U.S. Attorney’s Office, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Phoenix Police Department. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to disrupt organized criminal groups in the state of Arizona who attempt to defraud our most vulnerable citizens.”

A conviction for mail fraud in which the defendants target elderly victims through telemarketing carries an enhanced maximum penalty of 30 years, a \$250,000 fine (or twice the value of the loss), or both imprisonment and a fine.

An indictment is simply a method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the United States Secret Service and the Phoenix Police Department, with assistance from the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Special Investigations Section of the Arizona Attorney General's Office. The prosecution is being handled by Gary M. Restaino, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-18-1420-PHX-SPL
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