



# Department of Justice

**United States Attorney Bruce D. Brandler  
Middle District of Pennsylvania**

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## **JAMAICAN MAN INDICTED ON “SWEEPSTAKES FRAUD” CHARGES TARGETING SENIOR CITIZENS**

HARRISBURG – The United States Attorney’s Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania announced today that Tackya Whyte, age 41, a Jamaican citizen residing in Richmond, Virginia, was indicted by a federal grand jury on conspiracy, mail fraud, and money laundering charges.

Whyte was arrested on February 6, 2017, in Richmond and ordered detained by United States Magistrate Judge Susan E. Schwab following a February 14, 2017, preliminary hearing in Harrisburg.

According to United States Attorney Bruce D. Brandler, the indictment alleges that Whyte and unidentified fraudsters perpetrated a scheme to defraud senior citizens that were falsely told they had won a multi-million-dollar international sweepstakes prize. The indictment further alleges that the purported winners were directed to send Western Union and MoneyGram money transfers and money orders payable to Whyte, and others, to pre-pay taxes and other fictitious expenses in order to collect the non-existent cash prizes. The indictment also alleges that Whyte re-transferred the fraud proceeds to conspirators in Jamaica.

The case was investigated by the Harrisburg Office of the United States Postal Inspection Service. Assistant United States Attorney Kim Douglas Daniel is prosecuting the case.

*The United States Attorney and United States Postal Inspectors remind all citizens that they should never make an advance payment of any kind on the promise of a sweepstakes prize, loan or grant.*

Indictments and Criminal Informations are only allegations. All persons charged are presumed to be innocent unless and until found guilty in court.

A sentence following a finding of guilt is imposed by the Judge after consideration of the applicable federal sentencing statutes and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines.

Mail fraud and money laundering are each punishable by up to 20 years' imprisonment. Conspiracy to commit mail fraud and money laundering carry a five-year statutory maximum, a term of supervised release following imprisonment, and a fine. Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, the Judge is also required to consider and weigh a number of factors, including the nature, circumstances and seriousness of the offense; the history and characteristics of the defendant; and the need to punish the defendant, protect the public and provide for the defendant's educational, vocational and medical needs. For these reasons, the statutory maximum penalty for the offense is not an accurate indicator of the potential sentence for a specific defendant.

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