

Department of Justice
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Northern District of Ohio

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Brunswick couple charged with conspiracy to obstruct justice, tax violations

A nine-count indictment was filed charging a Brunswick couple with failing to make payments to support the pension and benefits fund of its employees and then obstructing the subsequent investigation, said Carole S. Rendon, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio.

Eric Dentz and Rebecca Dentz, both 39, are charged with conspiracy to obstruct justice, tampering with evidence, making false statements to federal agents, and failure to file taxes.

The Dentzs are former owners of Dentz Painting Incorporated (DPI), a company engaged in a collective bargaining agreement with the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades. Through that agreement, DPI was obligated to hire union laborers and to pay over contributions to the union's pension and benefits funds for the benefit of their employees, according to the indictment.

Audits conducted by the union found that DPI failed to pay over \$148,000 in contributions to the union's funds. Eric and Rebecca Dentz, and their company DPI, agreed in 2010 to make the delinquent contributions to the union's funds. However, instead of honoring their commitment, they discontinued working through DPI and started a new company, Global Contracting Service (Global), according to the indictment.

Despite this name change, Eric and Rebecca Dentz were still bound by the terms of the CBA. As a result of their failure to make required payments to the union's funds, agents and investigators with the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General and the Employee Benefits Security Administration, began an investigation into Eric and Rebecca Dentz, DPI and Global. This investigation was later joined by the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division.

Eric and Rebecca Dentz repeatedly obstructed the investigation. In particular, after agents attempted to serve subpoenas and obtain documents relevant to the investigation, Eric Dentz threatened them with physical violence. Additionally, Rebecca Dentz repeatedly lied to agents about her and Eric Dentz's involvement with Global and the location of records responsive to the subpoena, according to the indictment.

During proceedings held before United States District Chief Judge Solomon Oliver, Jr., Eric and Rebecca Dentz continued to obstruct justice by lying about the status and condition of the records. Specifically, the Dentzs lied by stating that the records sought by the grand jury were destroyed in a flood and later supplied agents and the court with a fake cleaning invoice in an attempt to support their false claims. Further investigation revealed that the invoice had been fabricated at Eric and Rebecca Dentz's request. The Dentzs also obstructed and delayed the investigation by falsely stating that third parties possessed the records sought by the grand jury when those individuals in fact had no such records, according to the indictment.

The indictment further alleges that Eric and Rebecca Dentz also repeatedly failed to file income tax returns with the IRS over several years.

"These defendants tried time and again to dodge their obligations to their employees," Rendon said. "When confronted with this, they didn't own up to their failures, but instead tried to obstruct the investigation."

"As tax filing season is upon us, those Americans who file accurate, honest and timely returns can be assured that the government will hold accountable those who don't," said Troy Stemen, Acting Special Agent in Charge IRS-Criminal Investigation, Cincinnati Field Office.

If convicted, the defendants' sentences will be determined by the Court after review of the factors unique to this case, including the defendants' prior criminal records, their roles in the offense and the characteristics of the criminal conduct. In all cases, the sentence will not exceed the statutory maximum and in most cases it will be less than the maximum.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Om Kakani, following an investigation by the Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration, the Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, and the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.