

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Former Massachusetts State Senator Sentenced to 18 Months in Prison for COVID and Tax Fraud**

Friday, February 7, 2025

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**For Immediate Release**

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Massachusetts

## **Defendant convicted by federal jury of 23 felony counts**

BOSTON – Former Massachusetts State Senator Dean A. Tran was sentenced today in federal court in Boston for scheming to defraud the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance and collecting income that he failed to report to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Tran, 48, of Fitchburg, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Chief Judge F. Dennis Saylor, IV to 18 months in prison, to be followed by two years of supervised release. Tran was also ordered to pay \$25,100 in restitution to the Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance and \$23,327 to the Internal Revenue Service, as well as a \$7,500 fine and a mandatory assessment of \$2,300. [In September 2024](#), Tran was convicted of 20 counts of wire fraud and three counts of filing false tax returns. The defendant was indicted by a federal grand jury in November 2023.

Tran served as an elected member of the Massachusetts State Senate, representing Worcester and Middlesex Counties from 2017 to January 2021. After Tran's State Senate term ended in 2021, Tran fraudulently received pandemic unemployment benefits while simultaneously employed as a paid consultant for a New Hampshire-based retailer of automotive parts (the Automotive Parts Company). While working as a paid consultant for the Automotive Parts Company, Tran fraudulently collected \$30,120 in pandemic unemployment benefits.

In addition, Tran concealed \$54,700 in consulting income that he received from the Automotive Parts Company from his 2021 federal income tax return. This was in addition to thousands of dollars in income that Tran concealed from the IRS while collecting rent from tenants who rented his Fitchburg property from 2020 to 2022.

*“When Dean Tran took his oath of office as a Massachusetts State Senator, he willingly entered into a world of being in the public eye. He chose to violate the public’s trust not once, but twice by defrauding the government out of unemployment benefits and willfully omitting his taxable income. His fraud and calculated deception erode the public’s trust in elected officials and diverted money away from those who truly needed it,” said United States Attorney Leah B. Foley. “Our office and our law enforcement partners are committed to rooting out public officials who violate the law and holding them accountable for their actions.”*

“Former Massachusetts State Senator Dean Tran stole taxpayer funds intended for American workers who lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. His sentencing affirms the Office of Inspector General’s commitment to prioritize and investigate allegations of fraud involving the U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) unemployment insurance (UI) program. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to protect the integrity of the UI system from those who exploit this critical benefit program,” stated Jonathan Mellone, Special Agent-in-Charge, Northeast Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

“Today’s sentencing of Dean Tran demonstrates that no one is above the law, even elected officials,” said Thomas Demeo, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, Boston Field Office. “Elected officials are held to a higher standard when they take an oath to serve but to Tran, his oath meant nothing when he chose to steal from the America taxpayers on two separate occasions. Tran stole from a pandemic unemployment program designed to help those most in need. Tran proceeded to harm the American public further when he decided not to report his taxable income, the most basic of principles all Americans are expected to follow.”

“Former Massachusetts State Senator Dean Tran blatantly defrauded a government program meant to keep businesses and workers afloat during the pandemic, using the money for his own personal expenses, effectively stealing funds from others who needed them,” said Jodi Cohen, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigations Boston Division. “The FBI and our partners will continue to crack down on frauds like this because willfully defrauding the government and cheating honest taxpayers is a federal crime.”

U.S. Attorney Foley, DOL-OIG SAC Mellone, Acting IRS-CI SAC Thomas Demeo and FBI SAC Cohen made the announcement. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Dustin Chao and John T. Mulcahy of the Office's Public Corruption & Special Prosecutions prosecuted the case.

On May 17, 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus> and <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus/combatingfraud>.

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) Hotline via the [NCDF Web Complaint Form](#).

*Updated February 7, 2025*

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