



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney Patrick A. Miles, Jr.  
Western District of Michigan

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## **BATTLE CREEK HOTEL OWNER INDICTED FOR LYING TO THE US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ABOUT MINIMUM WAGE PAYMENTS**

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN — U.S. Attorney Patrick A. Miles announced today that Mehul Chandubhai Patel, a/k/a “Mike Patel,” 31, of Battle Creek, Michigan, appeared in federal district court today to be arraigned on charges that stem from false statements he made to the Department of Labor during an investigation into violations of the minimum wage law.

On December 14, 2016, a federal grand jury charged Patel with falsely advising the U.S. Department of Labor that he had paid his employees as required by federal minimum wage rules, when in fact he had required the employees to return the money to him after being paid. Each charge carries a maximum possible sentence of five years in prison and other penalties. Patel was released on bond after being required to surrender his passport and be subject to electronic monitoring.

U.S. Attorney Miles stated, “There are good reasons why we have a minimum wage law. Workers have the right to a fair wage for a job well done. If an employer tries to cheat his employees out of paying the bare minimum wage permitted in this country, the Department of Labor will come calling to make him follow this law. If that same employer is so brazen that he then lies to the Department of Labor about repaying his employees, federal agents will come calling with an arrest warrant.”

Prosecution of the matter has been assigned to Timothy VerHey, Assistant U.S. Attorney. The matter was investigated by the US Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Homeland Security Investigations, and the Battle Creek Police Department. “An important mission of the Office of Inspector General is to investigate allegations relating to obstruction of U.S. Labor Department functions and investigations. We will continue to work with our law enforcement and intra-Agency partners to investigate these types of allegations,” stated James Vanderberg, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Regional Office of the United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. Steve Francis, Acting Special Agent in Charge for HSI Detroit stated “HSI will continue to use its broad jurisdiction to hold employers accountable. One of our primary investigative priorities is to ensure a level playing field for all businesses through our worksite enforcement strategy.”

The charges in an indictment are merely accusations, and a defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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