

PRESS RELEASE

Hot Springs Man Sentenced to More Than 4 Years in Prison for Money Laundering and Wire Fraud

Monday, March 17, 2025

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Arkansas

HOT SPRINGS – An Arkansas man was sentenced on March 12, 2025, to 57 months in federal prison and ordered to pay \$252,344.00 in restitution, followed by three years of supervised release following his guilty pleas to money laundering and wire fraud charges. The Honorable Chief Judge Susan O. Hickey presided over the sentencing hearing, which took place in the United States District Court in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

According to court documents, **John Christopher Bates**, 57, waived indictment by a grand jury and pleaded guilty to an information charging him with money laundering and wire fraud. The two counts related to separate schemes, one involving false applications for benefits to the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, who administers the state's distribution of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. The other related to Bates's fraudulent applications for Economic Impact Disaster Loans, totaling more than \$1 million.

U.S. Attorney David Clay Fowlkes of the Western District of Arkansas made the announcement.

The Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, and the Department of Labor Office of the Inspector General investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Trent Daniels and Hunter Bridges prosecuted the case.

Related court documents may be found on the Public Access to Electronic Records website at www.pacer.gov.

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