

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Maryland

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Man Admits to Participating in an Elder Fraud
“Grandparent” Scam and a Covid-19 Cares Act Fraud
Scheme Resulting in a Combined Loss of More Than \$3
Million**

**Ulysse and His co-Conspirators Submitted at least 143 Fraudulent
Unemployment Applications in the Names of Identity Theft Victims and
Scammed at least 83 Elderly Victims Across the United States**

Baltimore, Maryland – Medard Ulysse, age 38, of Miami, Florida, pleaded guilty today to wire fraud and conspiracy to commit mail fraud in relation to multiple fraud schemes, including an elder “grandparent” scheme and a COVID-19 CARES Act Fraud scheme.

The guilty plea was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Erik L. Barron; Special Agent in Charge Thomas J. Sobocinski of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Baltimore Field Office; and Acting Special Agent in Charge Troy W. Springer, of the Washington Regional Office, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

“Ulysee’s crimes are truly outrageous. Not only did he facilitate the deception and financial destruction of caring elderly victims by taking advantage of their love for their grandchildren, but he also used the identities of multiple victims to live large on federal CARES Act funding intended to ease financial hardships during a national crisis,” said U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland, Erik L. Barron. “I hope this conviction helps inform our elderly neighbors and their caretakers of the common grandparent scam. Remember- don’t panic, take the time to verify.”

According to his guilty plea, from January 2018 to November 2019, Ulysse and others executed grandparent scams in which they persuaded elderly victims to send thousands of dollars in cash by posing as a police officer, lawyer, or other person in law enforcement and convincing victims that their grandchild needed money for bail or legal fees. If the victims complied, conspiracy members asked for more cash claiming that additional funds were needed for legal expenses, fines, or damages. Conspirators also pretended to be the troubled relative on these phone calls to convince the elderly victims to send cash. Further, during the calls, conspirators directed the victims to send cash to particular addresses. To conceal the scheme, the conspirators told the victims that a gag order had been placed on the case or that the situation was embarrassing for the grandchild, and that the victim should not share the information with others.

For example, in March 2019, a conspiracy member (co-conspirator 1) called Victim 1, an 83-year-old Saint Charles, Illinois woman and posed as her grandson. During the call, co-conspirator 1 convinced the victim that he had been in an accident and was in jail. Co-conspirator 1 then stated that Victim 1 needed to send money to an address in Lancaster, Pennsylvania to pay for purported damages. Out of concern, Victim 1 sent a package containing \$20,000 in cash to the Lancaster address as instructed.

Ulysse admitted that he distributed and directed co-conspirators to distribute cash payments to other members for their participation in the scheme. As a result of the execution of the elder fraud

scheme, Ulysse and his co-conspirators convinced at least 83 different victims to send a total of at least \$2,420,280. Ulysse's criminal actions resulted in the substantial financial hardship to at least five of the victims.

From April 2020 to November 2020, Ulysse conducted a separate unemployment benefit scheme to fraudulently obtain unemployment funds, including Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance established under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the "CARES Act"). As part of the scheme to defraud, Ulysse and his conspirators used the identities of numerous victims to submit fraudulent unemployment claims to multiple state workforce agencies, including the Maryland Department of Labor and the California Employment Development Department. Once conspiracy members obtained the funds on state issued debit cards, they used the funds for their personal benefit.

As stated in his guilty plea, in November 2020, Ulysse was stopped in Valdosta, Georgia by Lowndes County Sheriff's ("LCSO"). LCSO sheriffs executed a search Ulysse's vehicle and found debit cards in the names of three identity theft victims as well as 25 other debit cards in names other than Ulysse's name.

In total, between April 2020 and November 2020, Ulysse and others submitted at least 143 fraudulent applications in the names of identity theft victims and obtained approximately \$618,767 in fraudulent funds.

Ulysse and the government have agreed that, if the Court accepts the plea agreement, Ulysse will be sentenced to a minimum of 48 months in federal prison. U.S. District Judge Richard D. Bennett has scheduled sentencing for December 19 2023 at 11 a.m.

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, among other methods, 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>.

United States Attorney Erik L. Barron commended the FBI, DOL-OIG, for their work in the investigation and thanked the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department for their assistance. Mr. Barron thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Sean R. Delaney and Christine Goo, who are prosecuting the case.

For more information on the Maryland U.S. Attorney's Office, its priorities, and resources available to help the community, please visit www.justice.gov/usao-md and <https://www.justice.gov/usao-md/elder-justice-initiative>.

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