

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Members And Associates Of Genovese Crime Family Charged In Manhattan Federal Court With Racketeering Conspiracy And Related Offenses

Geoffrey S. Berman, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, William F. Sweeney Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and James P. O'Neill, the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), announced the unsealing today of an Indictment charging VINCENT ESPOSITO, STEVEN ARENA, FRANK GIOVINCO, FRANK COGNETTA, and VINCENT D'ACUNTO, JR., each a member or associate of the Genovese Organized Crime Family of La Cosa Nostra, with racketeering conspiracy and related offenses arising out of a multi-year investigation. COGNETTA was arrested on January 8, 2018, and charged by criminal complaint. The remaining defendants were arrested this morning and are expected to be presented before U.S. Magistrate Judge Barbara C. Moses later today. The case has been assigned to United States District Judge Victor Marrero. The following allegations are based on the Indictment and other documents filed in Manhattan federal court^[1]:

La Cosa Nostra, also known as the "Mob" or the "Mafia," operates through entities known as "Families." One of the Families operating in the New York City area is the Genovese Crime Family. From 2001 to 2017, ESPOSITO, ARENA, GIOVINCO, COGNETTA, and D'ACUNTO, along with other members and associates of the Genovese Crime Family, committed a wide range of crimes, including multiple acts of extortion, honest services fraud, and bribery. In particular, and as charged in the Indictment, ESPOSITO conspired with ARENA and D'ACUNTO to extort annual cash payments from an officer at a labor union by threatening the officer with violence and the loss of the officer's job. COGNETTA, himself a labor union officer, engaged in multiple schemes to defraud his union of his honest services by, among other things, soliciting and accepting bribes and steering union benefit plans into investments in exchange for kickbacks.

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Set forth below is a chart containing the names, ages, residences, charges, and maximum penalties for the defendants. The maximum potential sentence is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the judge.

Mr. Berman praised the outstanding investigative work of the FBI, the NYPD, the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General and Office of Labor-Management Standards, and the Special Agents of the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York.

The case is being prosecuted by the Office's Violent and Organized Crime Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jared P. Lenow, Kimberly J. Ravener, and Jason M. Swergold are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

<u>DEFENDANT</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>CHARGES</u>	<u>MAXIMUM PENALTY</u>
VINCENT ESPOSITO	50	RICO Conspiracy; Extortion Conspiracy	40 years in prison
STEVEN ARENA	60	RICO Conspiracy; Extortion Conspiracy	40 years in prison
FRANK GIOVINCO	50	RICO Conspiracy	20 years in prison
FRANK COGNETTA	42	RICO Conspiracy; Six Counts of Honest Services Fraud; Two Counts of Bribery in Connection with Employee Benefit Plans	126 years in prison
VINCENT D'ACUNTO, JR.	49	RICO Conspiracy; Extortion Conspiracy	40 years in prison