



U.S. Department of Justice

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August 21, 2014

NEWS RELEASE

**OWNER OF CONNECTICUT FINANCIAL SERVICES COMPANY
PLEADS GUILTY TO MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS
REGARDING MILITARY PENSION BENEFITS**

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania announced today that Richard A. Ullmann, age 50, of Westport, Connecticut, pleaded guilty to making false statements to the Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) in federal court in Harrisburg before Chief United States District Court Judge Christopher C. Conner. Ullmann faces up to five years' imprisonment and/or \$250,000 in fines as a result of the guilty plea. Ullmann was released pending sentencing, which is scheduled for November 28, 2014.

According to U.S. Attorney Peter Smith, Ullmann owned and operated a financial services company based in Westport, Connecticut, called Donnell Financial Group (Donnell), that made short-term loans to members of the U.S. Armed Forces, military retirees and their survivors, and others. In exchange for the loans, Donnell's customers assigned their future pension payments to Mr. Ullmann as collateral. Federal law prohibits the assignment of pension benefits as collateral for members of the armed forces and military retirees. DFAS also prohibits anyone but the account holder to make changes to their account, including where the payments shall be deposited and who should receive the funds.

In March 2009, DFAS warned Mr. Ullmann that his practice of impersonating the account holder in order to direct

payments into bank accounts he controlled could subject him to prosecution. Ullmann admitted today that despite that warning, he continued to impersonate numerous individuals and direct their pension payments into bank accounts he controlled until February 2014, when federal agents executed a search warrant at Donnell.

The case was investigated by the Department of Defense, Office of Inspector General, and is assigned to Senior Litigation Counsel Bruce Brandler for prosecution.

Indictments and Criminal Informations are only allegations. All persons charged are presumed to be innocent unless and until found guilty in court.

A sentence following a finding of guilty is imposed by the Judge after consideration of the applicable federal sentencing statutes and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines.

Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, the Judge is also required to consider and weigh a number of factors, including the nature, circumstances and seriousness of the offense; the history and characteristics of the defendant; and the need to punish the defendant, protect the public and provide for the defendant's educational, vocational and medical needs. For these reasons, the statutory maximum penalty for the offense is not an accurate indicator of the potential sentence for a specific defendant.
