



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
NORTHERN DISTRICT *of* ILLINOIS

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of Illinois

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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North Suburban Man Sentenced to 5 Years in Federal Prison for Operating Ponzi Scheme That Swindled Elderly Investors

CHICAGO — A north suburban man was sentenced today to five years in federal prison for swindling more than \$1.4 million from several clients, some of whom were elderly and had pledged their retirement savings.

RICHARD K. BOOY, the founder of Principal Financial Strategies LLC and Safe Financial Strategies Inc., used the promise of no-risk investments and guaranteed returns to persuade at least 15 clients to hand over more than \$1.4 million. Although Booy claimed to be affiliated with the more widely known investment firm Principal Financial Group, he had no actual relationship with the firm and was not authorized to invest client funds with it. Instead of investing the funds as promised to clients, Booy used the victims' money to cover personal expenses, including health insurance, fitness club membership, and purchases at Best Buy and DirecTV, and to make Ponzi-type payments to earlier investors.

Booy, 50, of Vernon Hills, pleaded guilty last year to one count of mail fraud. U.S. District Judge Gary Feinerman imposed the 60-month sentence in federal court in Chicago.

The sentence was announced by John R. Lausch, Jr., United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Craig Goldberg, Inspector-in-Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service in Chicago; Jeffrey A. Monhart, Regional Director of the Chicago Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration; and Tanya Solov, Director of the Illinois Securities Department of the Illinois Secretary of State.

"Defendant committed much of this egregious conduct while sitting in his victims' homes and in their places of worship," Assistant U.S. Attorney Matthew S. Ebert argued in the government's sentencing memorandum. "While face-to-face repeatedly with his victims, Booy brazenly made

his pitch knowing that his actual purpose was to obtain and then devour his victims' savings, pensions, and income."

Booy carried out his fraud scheme from 2012 to 2016. He continued his scheme even after Principal Financial Group obtained a temporary restraining order against him that led to a court-authorized seizure of his computer and other evidence from Booy's home.

Most of Booy's victims were elderly, and some furnished him with their entire life savings. The victims included a Chicago pastor, a retired painter, a retired government worker, and an individual who suffers from Parkinson's Disease.

Topic(s):

Elder Justice

Financial Fraud

Securities, Commodities, & Investment Fraud

Component(s):

USAO - Illinois, Northern

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