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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of California

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, September 11, 2015

San Francisco Resident Charged In Alleged Identity Theft, Bank Fraud, And Aggravated Identity Theft Scheme

SAN FRANCISCO – Charlyne Basada, AKA Charlyne Melendres, was arrested today in connection with an alleged bank fraud, wire fraud, and identity theft scheme, announced Acting United States Attorney Brian Stretch and Jean Ackerman, Regional Director of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration.

In an indictment unsealed this morning, Basada, 38, of San Francisco, was charged with fraudulently making payments to herself from her employers' checking accounts. According to the indictment, Basada was employed by three separate companies between 2010 and 2015, and at each company, she obtained access to the payment systems of her employer. The indictment alleges that Basada devised and executed a scheme to defraud by using these corporate payment systems to initiate fraudulent payments to herself. In so doing, she created the false appearance that she was entitled to funds for wages, reimbursements, and other payments. The indictment further alleges that vendors for the companies were not paid and employee contributions to retirement plans were not made in order to help conceal the fraud.

Also alleged in the indictment, Basada prepared checks that were intended to pay personal vendors of one of her employers. Her employer signed these checks believing that they would be paid to vendors. However, Basada fraudulently completed the payee portion of the check to "cash" and deposited the checks into her own personal bank account. Basada was charged with twelve counts of bank fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1344; four counts of wire fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1343; and two counts of aggravated identity theft, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028A(a)(1).

Basada was arrested this morning by Special Agents from the United States Department of Labor's Office of the Inspector General. She was then arraigned and released on a \$100,000 bond. Her next court appearance is scheduled for September 24, 2015, at 2:00 p.m., for an initial appearance before U.S. District Judge Charles R. Breyer.

An indictment merely alleges that crimes have been committed, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. If convicted, the maximum statutory penalty for bank fraud is 30 years' imprisonment and \$1,000,000 or twice the gross gain or loss. The maximum statutory penalty for each count of wire fraud is 20 years' imprisonment and \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss. The maximum statutory penalty for aggravated identity theft is a mandatory two years of imprisonment in addition

to any sentence imposed. Additional periods of supervised release, fines, and special assessments also could be imposed. However, any sentence following conviction would be imposed by the court only after consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal statute governing the imposition of a sentence, 18 U.S.C. § 3553.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Benjamin Kingsley is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Mary Mallory and Jessica Meegan. The prosecution is the result of an investigation conducted by the San Francisco Regional Office of the United States Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration.

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Identity Theft

Component(s):USAO - California, Northern

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