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Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Arizona

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, April 27, 2021

Man Sentenced to 57 Months for Laundering Funds from Lottery Fraud Scheme Targeting the Elderly

TUCSON, Ariz. – Omar Stephenson, 32, a Jamaican-born man living in Snellville, Georgia, was sentenced yesterday by United States District Judge James A. Soto to 57 months in prison. Stephenson is one of four co-defendants who have been charged in connection with a lottery fraud scheme. Stephenson previously pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering.

Starting in 2015 through mid-2019, Stephenson participated in a scheme where Jamaican-based scammers called elderly victims in the United States, claiming the victims had won a lottery. To receive their winnings, the victims were told they must first pay money for taxes and fees. Stephenson's role in this scheme was to launder the fraudulent proceeds for fellow co-conspirators in Jamaica. The loss suffered by the victims exceeded \$900,000.

As part of his sentence, Stephenson will also be required to pay restitution. A separate hearing is scheduled for June 2 to determine the amount of that restitution.

The U.S. Attorney's Office encourages the public to be wary of similar scams and to verify with law enforcement and family members before sending money after a phone solicitation.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation, United States Postal Inspection Service, and Homeland Security Investigations conducted the investigation in this case. The U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, Tucson, handled the prosecution.

CASE NUMBER: CR-19-00917-JAS-1
RELEASE NUMBER: 2021-029_Stephenson

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Topic(s):

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Financial Fraud

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