

United States Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner

Eastern District of California

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FORMER FBI SPECIAL AGENT PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGAL CASH DEPOSITS

FRESNO, Calif. —Travis Raymond Wilson, 38, of Huntington Beach, pleaded guilty today to structuring financial transactions in violation of the federal Bank Secrecy Act, United States Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner announced.

The Bank Secrecy Act requires financial institutions, such as banks, to file Currency Transaction Reports (CTRs) on any cash transaction that is greater than \$10,000. CTRs are filed with the U.S. Department of Treasury and are made available to law enforcement agencies, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It is a federal crime to make cash deposits in an amount of \$10,000 or less with the intent to prevent a financial institution from filing CTRs, such transactions are known as structuring.

According to court documents, Wilson was an FBI special agent formerly assigned to the Fresno Resident Agency of the Sacramento Field Office. He was most recently a supervisory special agent in the FBI Long Beach Resident Office of the Los Angeles Field Office. Between January 2008 and February 2013, Wilson regularly gambled at casinos in California, Nevada, Arizona, and West Virginia. Even though he frequently left the Casinos with more than \$10,000 cash, Wilson regularly made deposits in amounts of \$10,000 or less into his bank account. Wilson structured his cash deposits to attempt to prevent CTRs from being filed because he did not want the FBI to become aware of his gambling activities. In total, Wilson structured more than \$488,000 in cash into his bank account.

“Agent Wilson was well aware of the CTR requirement, and engaged in a pattern of transactions intended to circumvent the reporting of cash transactions under the Bank Secrecy Act,” said U.S. Attorney Wagner. “It is particularly important that federal law enforcement agents be faithful to the letter and spirit of federal law.”

DOJ Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz stated: “When a law enforcement agent conceals ongoing gambling activity it risks creating a security vulnerability. The DOJ OIG will partner with prosecutors and other investigative agencies to ensure that such conduct does not go unchecked within the Department of Justice.”

“The structuring of currency is an avenue used by individuals and businesses to conceal the true

source of their money,” said José M. Martínez, Special Agent in Charge, IRS Criminal Investigation. “Currency report information filed by banks and financial institutions provides a paper trail, or roadmap, for investigations involving financial crimes. Individuals who deliberately break up cash deposits into amounts less than \$10,000, to avoid the filing of CTRs, are committing a financial crime.”

This case is the product of an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation, the Department of Justice Office of Inspector General, and the Central California Financial Crimes Task Force. Assistant United States Attorney Grant B. Rabenn is prosecuting the case.

Wilson is scheduled to be sentenced by United States District Judge Anthony W. Ishii on March 3, 2014. Wilson faces a maximum statutory penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of any applicable statutory factors and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables.

The Central California Financial Crimes task force is dedicated to investigating and prosecuting money laundering and Bank Secrecy Act violations in the Eastern District of California. It is composed of task force officers from the Bakersfield Police Department, Fresno Police Department, and federal agents from the IRS Criminal Investigation, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the United States Postal Inspection Service.

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