

# NEWS RELEASE

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*For Immediate Release*  
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## STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA MAN INDICTED ON FRAUD CHARGES

A. Courtney Cox, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on September 23, 2009, the Federal Grand Jury seated in the United States District Court in East St. Louis returned an indictment against **MICHAEL RONELL USSERY, JR.**, age 33, of Stockton, California, on fraud and conspiracy charges.

*An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.*

The indictment indicates that **USSERY**, a former federal inmate, conspired with others and defrauded a current federal inmate confined in southern Illinois. The indictment alleges that **USSERY** communicated to the federal inmate that he (**USSERY**) legally get him (inmate) a reduction in his term of imprisonment. **USSERY** represented himself as a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) informant who, along with an alleged DEA Special Agent, could obtain sentence reductions for federal inmates who funded DEA undercover operations. In staggered, small payments, the inmate gave **USSERY** \$36,500.00; **USSERY** did not follow through on his end. Even so, inmates are not allowed to purchase reductions of sentences. **USSERY** was also able to obtain additional identification information from the inmate and then have \$145,000.00 removed from the inmate's financial account and transmitted to an account he (**USSERY**) controlled.

With respect to the three mail fraud and three wire fraud counts, **USSERY** faces 20 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both. With respect to the conspiracy charge, **USSERY** faces 5 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. The case is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Liam Coonan.