

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA MAN SENTENCED ON FRAUD CHARGES

A. Courtney Cox, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on March 15, 2010, in the United States District Court in Benton, **MICHAEL RONELL USSERY, JR.**, age 34, of Stockton, California, was sentenced on charges of Conspiracy, three counts of Wire Fraud, and three counts of Mail Fraud.

The indictment alleged that **USSERY**, a former federal inmate, conspired with others and defrauded a current federal inmate previously confined in southern Illinois. The indictment alleges that **USSERY** communicated to the federal inmate that he (**USSERY**) could legally get the 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** acted without any legal authority. 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. **USSERY** pled to all charges in the indictment.

The United States District Court in Benton sentenced **USSERY** to 61 months of imprisonment, and three years of supervised release. The Court also ordered **USSERY** to pay criminal restitution in the amount of \$24,420.78 and a special assessment of \$700.00.

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 was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Liam Coonan.