

Former FBI Special Agent Sentenced to 6 Years in Prison for Accepting Bribes Paid by Attorney Linked to Organized Crime Figure

Monday, February 27, 2023

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Central District of California

LOS ANGELES – A former FBI special agent was sentenced today to 72 months in federal prison for conspiring to accept at least \$150,000 in cash bribes and other items of value in exchange for providing sensitive law enforcement information to a corrupt attorney with ties to Armenian organized crime.

Babak Broumand, 56, of Lafayette, California, was sentenced by United States District Judge R. Gary Klausner. In addition to the prison sentence, Judge Klausner ordered Broumand to pay a \$30,000 fine and to forfeit \$132,309 linked to his criminal activity.

“Mr. Broumand took an oath of office, swearing to defend the laws of the United States and to uphold the high standards of the FBI. He violated this solemn promise and now he will face the consequences of his choice,” said United States Attorney Martin Estrada. “Not only did this one-time special agent put his self-interest above all else, but he also did so while providing support to other criminals who compromise public safety. I am grateful for our hard-working law enforcement partners, including the FBI, who worked to uncover this misconduct and brought this corrupt agent to justice.”

“Today's sentencing of Mr. Broumand, a former FBI agent who abandoned his pledge to serve the American people in exchange for a lavish lifestyle, is gratifying and reaffirms the FBI's commitment to weeding out corruption of public officials, including those from within.” said Donald Alway, the Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office. “I'm proud of the agents and prosecutors who devoted years to this sensitive investigation and trial which resulted in today's outcome and a restoration of trust by the people we serve.”

A federal jury in October 2022 found Broumand guilty of one count of conspiracy, two counts of bribery of a public official, and one count of monetary transactions in property derived from specified unlawful activity. The jury found Broumand not guilty of one count of bribery of a public official and one count of monetary transactions in property derived from specified unlawful activity.

Broumand has been in federal custody since the jury returned the guilty verdict against him at the conclusion of an 11-day trial.

"Broumand conspired with the very types of criminals he was trusted to investigate, taking bribes in exchange for information. Today's sentencing should send a clear message that no one is above the law, and that the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General is committed to rooting out this kind of corruption," said Zachary Shroyer, Special Agent in Charge of the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General Los Angeles Field Office.

"Every law enforcement officer took an oath to never betray their integrity and to enforce the law with fairness and justice when they enter this profession. Unfortunately, Babak Broumand betrayed that oath and violated the trust bestowed on him by the American people when he released sensitive law enforcement information in exchange for money, gifts, and other personal benefits," said Darren Lian, Special Agent in Charge of the IRS Criminal Investigation's Oakland Field Office. "Today's sentence shows that no one is above the law, and those who dare to cross the line will be held responsible for their unlawful actions. IRS Criminal Investigation, along with its law enforcement partners, are fully committed to pursue those who undermine the integrity of our justice system."

Broumand was a Bay Area resident and served as an FBI special agent from January 1999 until shortly after search warrants were served on his home and businesses in 2018. He was responsible for national security investigations and was assigned to the FBI Field Office in San Francisco.

From January 2015 to December 2018, Broumand accepted cash, checks, private jet flights, a Ducati motorcycle, hotel stays, escorts, meals, and other items of value from an organized crime-linked attorney – identified in court papers as "E.S.," and each man acted to conceal the true nature of their corrupt relationship.

In return for the bribe payments and other items of value, Broumand conducted law enforcement database inquiries and used those inquiries to help E.S. and his associates avoid prosecution and law enforcement monitoring. Specifically, Broumand informed E.S. whether a particular person or entity was under criminal investigation by stating that E.S. should "stay away" from that person or that they were "OK."

To conceal the nature of their corrupt relationship, Broumand made it falsely appear that E.S. was working as an FBI source. Broumand wrote false reports after the fact to make it appear that he conducted legitimate law enforcement database inquiries.

In exchange for the illegal inquiries, E.S. paid Broumand at least \$150,000 in cash and check bribes, including a Ducati motorcycle and accessories valued at more than \$36,000. The bribes were deposited into the accounts for Love Bugs LLC, a Lafayette-based lice-removal hair salon business that Broumand and his wife started in 2007.

Soon after the bribery scheme began, E.S. asked Broumand to query the FBI database for Levon Termendzhyan, an Armenian organized crime figure for whom E.S. had worked. The database search "rang all the bells" and revealed an FBI investigation in Los Angeles, according to court documents, which note that Broumand accessed the FBI case file on Termendzhyan repeatedly in January 2015. Broumand also allegedly accessed the Termendzhyan FBI case file in May 2016.

Termendzhyan, a.k.a. "Lev Aslan Dermen," was [found guilty in March 2020](#) in federal court in Utah on criminal charges related to a \$1 billion renewable fuel tax credit fraud scheme. His sentencing hearing in the District of Utah is scheduled for April 6.

In December 2015, at E.S.'s request, Broumand searched a confidential FBI database for information about Sam Sarkis Solakyan, a medical imaging company CEO, and later warned E.S. to "stay away" from Solakyan, who was "trouble," meaning that Solakyan was under law enforcement investigation. Solakyan eventually was charged in San Diego federal court, tried, convicted and [sentenced to five years in federal prison](#) for running a scheme that submitted more than \$250 million fraudulent claims through California's workers compensation system.

In May 2016, Broumand interfered with an FBI investigation into Felix Cisneros Jr., a corrupt special agent with Homeland Security Investigations who also had ties to Termendzhyan. Cisneros was convicted at trial in two different cases. The first trial, in 2018, resulted from Cisneros's corrupt acts for Termendzhyan. The second trial, in April 2022, resulted from Cisneros's corrupt acts for E.S. Cisneros was [sentenced to 10 years](#) in federal prison.

The FBI, the United States Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General, and IRS Criminal Investigation investigated this matter. The United States Department of Homeland Security's Office of the Inspector General provided assistance at Broumand's trial.

Assistant United States Attorneys Michael J. Morse of the Public Corruption and Civil Rights Section, Juan M. Rodriguez of the Environmental and Community Safety Crimes Section, and Tara B. Vavere of the Asset Forfeiture and Recovery Section prosecuted this case.