



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Timothy M. O'Shea
Western District of Wisconsin

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CONTACT: CHADWICK M. ELGERSMA

PHONE: (608) 264-5158

X: @USAO_WDWI

EAU CLAIRE MAN SENTENCED TO 3 YEARS FOR WIRE FRAUD

Robert E. Carter Forged Financial Statements to Fraudulently Obtain Semi-Trucks

MADISON, WIS. – Timothy M. O'Shea, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Robert E. Carter, 45, Eau Claire, Wisconsin was sentenced October 17, 2024 by U.S. District Judge William M. Conley to three years in prison for wire fraud and attempted wire fraud. Carter was convicted of these charges on July 16, 2024, following a jury trial.

Carter's fraud scheme started in 2018 when he feigned interest in purchasing a trucking company headquartered in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. After telling elaborate lies about owning private jets and a personal yacht, Carter convinced the owners that he wanted to buy their trucking and brokerage companies for \$10 million. Carter then sent the owners a letter of intent that required them to provide Carter, under the guise of due diligence, with the companies' sensitive business information, including financial statements. Carter eventually informed the companies' owners that Carter needed to back out of the deal; however, he held on to the financial statements for two years.

In 2020, Carter intentionally changed the financial statements that he fraudulently obtained from the Fond du Lac-based companies and made it appear as if the documents belonged to Carter's businesses. Carter then submitted the phony financial statements to an equipment leasing company so Carter could fraudulently obtain three semi-trucks and two trailers.

While defrauding the first leasing company, Carter simultaneously downloaded financial statements from the Internet that belonged to a charitable trust in Iowa. Again, Carter intentionally changed these financial statements so the documents appeared to belong to Carter's trust. Carter then submitted the fake trust financial statements to a second equipment leasing company in an attempt to fraudulently lease ten more semi-trucks.

In sentencing Carter, Judge Conley highlighted Carter's criminal history, which included prior convictions for fraud.

The charges against Carter were the result of an investigation conducted by IRS Criminal Investigations and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with assistance provided by the Office of the U.S. Trustee for the Western District of Wisconsin. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Chadwick M. Elgersma and Megan R. Stelljes prosecuted this case.

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