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October 30, 2009
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RINGLEADER OF STOLEN TREASURY CHECK RING SENTENCED TO PRISON

Twelve Co-Conspirators used Phony Driver's Licenses to Cash Stolen Checks

Baltimore, Maryland - U.S. District Judge Catherine C. Blake sentenced David Cooley, age 36, of Baltimore today to 69 months in prison followed by five years of supervised release for conspiracy to commit mail fraud and aggravated identity theft in connection with a scheme to steal treasury checks from the mail and cash the checks using false identity documents, announced United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein. Judge Blake also ordered that Cooley pay \$104,446.35 in restitution.

“David Cooley led an organized conspiracy of at least 12 criminals, including a mail carrier, who stole U.S. Treasury checks from the mail and then used fake driver’s licenses to cash the checks,” said U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein. “Because the scheme used the identities of real victims, the defendant will serve an additional two years in federal prison for aggravated identity theft.”

According to Cooley’s plea agreement and court documents, from March 2006 to May 2007, Cooley obtained U.S. Treasury checks from co-defendant Leonard Jenkins, a mail carrier who had stolen the checks. Cooley recruited individuals, known as strikers, to cash the stolen checks using fake Maryland driver’s licenses created by co-defendant Chamarkco Amin. Cooley arranged for passport photos to be taken of the strikers and delivered the photos, along with stolen identity information, to co-defendant Derek Taylor, to give to Amin. At least five strikers worked for Cooley. Cooley paid Jenkins for the stolen checks, paid approximately \$250 for each identification and paid the strikers a portion of the face value of the checks cashed. Cooley kept the remainder of the proceeds for himself.

Altogether, the conspirators cashed over \$100,000 in stolen United States Treasury checks. More than 50 individuals and businesses were victims of the scheme.

To date, 12 defendants have been convicted for their participation in this scheme, of which 11 have been sentenced from two years to 75 months in prison. The remaining defendant, Leonard Jenkins, age 27, of Baltimore, pleaded guilty to mail fraud, theft of mail and aggravated identity theft and is scheduled to be sentenced on November 3, 2009 at 9:15 a.m.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein thanked the U.S. Postal Inspection Service; the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General; the U.S. Secret Service; the Department of Transportation - Office of Inspector General; the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Office of Inspector General; and the District of Columbia Office of Inspector General for their investigative work and recognized the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia for their assistance in this case. Mr. Rosenstein commended Assistant United States Attorneys Tamera L. Fine and Emily Glatfelter, who prosecuted the case.