

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Inspector General

Inspector General



March 20, 2012

The Honorable Vincent C. Gray
Mayor
District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mayor's Correspondence Unit, 2nd Floor, Suite 316
Washington, D.C. 20004

RE: SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITY REPORT

Dear Mayor Gray:

This report is to inform you that on February 6, 2012, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced Abdul Kamus, a member of the public, to 12 months and 1 day of incarceration, followed by 24 months of supervised release for his role in the scheme to manipulate the District's taxicab industry. The court also ordered Mr. Kamus to pay a \$6,500.00 fine and to perform 100 hours of community service.

On February 10, 2012, a U.S. District Court judge sentenced Yitbarek Syume, Berhane Leghese, and Amanuel Ghirmazion, members of the public, for their roles in the scheme to manipulate the District's taxicab industry. Mr. Syume was sentenced to 41 months of incarceration (26 months were credited for time served), followed by 36 months of supervised release. The court also ordered him to perform 100 hours of community service. Mr. Leghese was sentenced to 12 months and 1 day of incarceration, followed by 24 months of supervised release. Mr. Ghirmazion was sentenced to 8 months of incarceration, followed by 24 months of supervised release. The court also ordered each defendant to perform 100 hours of community service.

Special Agent Elliott Taylor, of the D.C. Office of the Inspector General (OIG), along with agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, conducted the investigation. The investigation revealed that Messrs. Kamus, Syume, Leghese, and Ghirmazion were involved in a long term effort to illegally obtain licensing for a large number of taxicab companies in the District of Columbia. Simultaneously, they also were engaged in efforts to corruptly influence the enactment of legislation to benefit their taxicab endeavors. They either paid or offered to pay approximately \$250,000 in bribes for the taxicab company licenses and more than \$20,000 in bribes for the legislation.

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On March 2, 2011, Mr. Syume pled guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Bribery and Bribery for his conduct relating to this matter. On March 21, 2011, Messrs. Leghese and Ghirmazion pled guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Bribery. On April 14, 2010, Mr. Kamus pled guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Bribery and Bribery.

If you need any additional information, please call me or Stacie Pittell, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations, at (202) 727-2540. When calling, please reference OIG Control Number 2007-0234.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Charles J. Willoughby". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Charles J. Willoughby
Inspector General

CJW/est