



U.S. Department of Justice

Donald A. Davis
United States Attorney
Western District of Michigan

The Law Building, 5th Floor
330 Ionia Avenue, N.W.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

Mailing Address: (616) 456-2404
United States Attorneys Office Facsimile (616) 456-2408
Post Office Box 208
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501-0208

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CONTACT: MAARTEN VERMAAT
ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY
PHONE: (906) 226-2500

FORMER CHIEF OF POLICE FOR SAULT TRIBE OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS
CHARGED WITH CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD THE UNITED STATES

MARQUETTE, Mich. – Frederick James Paquin, age 52, of St. Ignace, Michigan, and the former Chief of Police for the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians, was charged by a grand jury with multiple offenses related to a scheme to defraud the United States by dishonest means, U.S. Attorney Donald A. Davis announced today. In addition, the grand jury charged Paquin and his daughter, Mary Christine Cullen, age 28, also of St. Ignace, with multiple offenses related to an alleged conspiracy to pay Cullen as a full time employee of the Tribe after she had moved on to a different job and was no longer working for the Tribe as a full time employee.

The charges stem from Paquin’s alleged misuse of federal grant funds awarded to Paquin’s police department under the U.S. Department of Justice’s Tribal Resources Grant Program (TRGP) between 2002 and 2008. Grants awarded under the TRGP are intended to help Native American Tribes address their most serious unmet financial needs for law enforcement. This case was investigated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of the Inspector General, Fraud Detection Office.

U.S. Attorney Davis stated: “The respect and confidence that tribal members place in their tribal institutions is dependant upon receiving honest and faithful services from their tribal officials. This office will aggressively pursue and prosecute tribal officials who violate the law and their solemn oath and duties.”

Elise Chawaga, Special Agent in Charge for the Office of the Inspector General Fraud Detection Office, said “the Office of the Inspector General is committed to holding accountable public officials who betray the trust placed in them by using for personal gain Department of Justice grant funds that were intended to benefit the public.”

FBI Special Agent in Charge Andrew G. Arena noted that “these charges are examples of corrupt government officials who have abused their positions for personal gain.” He added that “public corruption is a top criminal priority of the F.B.I. and will not be tolerated. This investigation demonstrates the F.B.I.’s commitment to investigating public corruption on every level and bringing those who betray the public’s trust to justice.”

The charges in this indictment are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed

innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Maarten Vermaat.

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