



*United States Attorney
District of New Jersey*

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**PLAINFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEE ADMITS CONSPIRING WITH
VENDOR TO DEFRAUD HIS EMPLOYER**

TRENTON, N.J. – A Piscataway, New Jersey, man today admitted conspiring with employees of Bayway Lumber in Linden, New Jersey, to use phony invoices to defraud the Plainfield Board of Education, resulting in losses of \$19,927, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Robert E. Banks, 54, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Peter G. Sheridan in Trenton federal court to an information charging him with one count of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

From 2007 to September 2015, Bayway Lumber had contracts with the Plainfield Board of Education to provide certain products at specified discounts from the manufacturer's listed prices. Banks was a carpenter and locksmith in the Plainfield Board of Education's maintenance department and was responsible for purchasing supplies from vendors.

During that time, Bayway Lumber charged the Plainfield Board of Education prices that did not include the contractual discounts and, at times, even charged the Plainfield Board of Education for items it did not receive. Afterwards, Banks signed off on the fraudulent and overbilled invoices. In return, the Bayway Lumber employees used a portion of the proceeds to purchase over \$9,000 in valuable items for Banks, including a laptop computer, a lawnmower, construction materials, and a dishwasher.

The charge to which Banks pleaded guilty carries a maximum potential penalty of five years in prison and \$250,000 fine, or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense. Sentencing is scheduled for Aug. 29, 2016.

Robert R. Dattilo, a part owner of Bayway Lumber, pleaded guilty before Judge Sheridan on Feb. 18, 2016, to conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud in connection with this and other fraudulent activity. He is scheduled to be sentenced on July 12, 2016.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents with the Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Christina Scaringi; special agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Timothy Gallagher in Newark; and the Office of Inspector General, Amtrak, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Robert Koons, as well as investigators of the U.S. Attorney's Office, with the investigation leading to today's guilty plea.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Barbara R. Llanes and Cari Fais of the U.S. Attorney's Office Special Prosecutions Division in Newark.

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Defense counsel: Lorraine Gauli-Rufo Esq., Verona, New Jersey