
THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
CENTRAL DISTRICT *of* ILLINOIS

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Central District of Illinois

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, July 19, 2019

Trial Date Scheduled for Former WIU Student Indicted for Alleged Amtrak Ticket Scheme

ROCK ISLAND, Ill. – A September trial date has been scheduled for a former student of Western Illinois University indicted on charges that he engaged in a two-year scheme to defraud Amtrak. The indictment charges Ryan Taylor Minter, 23, of Calumet City, Ill., with using stolen credit card information to purchase Amtrak tickets online. Minter then allegedly sold the tickets to students at a discount and pocketed the money.

Central District of Illinois U.S. Attorney John Milhiser and Kevin Winters, Amtrak Inspector General, announced the indictment which was returned by a federal grand jury in Peoria. The indictment had remained sealed since it was returned by the grand jury on June 19, 2019, pending Minter's arrest and arraignment. Minter was arrested on July 1 in Chicago; he appeared in federal court in Davenport, Iowa, on July 16, for arraignment before Chief U.S. District Judge Sara Darrow. He remains on bond with conditions. Judge Darrow scheduled trial for Minter on Sept. 23.

The indictment alleges that from September 2016 to November 2018, Minter acquired stolen credit card account information which he used to purchase Amtrak tickets for travel between Macomb, Ill., and Chicago. Minter allegedly used Amtrak's mobile application and website to purchase the tickets and then advertised them at a discount on social media sites frequented by students. Students paid Minter for the discounted ticket using an online account. Minter then forwarded the image of the purchased ticket to the student to present to conductors upon boarding for travel between Macomb and Chicago. In the indictment, the government is seeking \$15,492 in proceeds of the scheme, including \$6,550 in cash previously seized from Minter.

The charges are the result of investigation by Amtrak's Office of Inspector General, Amtrak Police, and the Western Illinois University Police Departments. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Don Allegro, Rock Island Division, in the prosecution.

If convicted, the maximum statutory penalty for each of the five counts of wire fraud charged is up to 20 years in prison.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; each defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

USAO - Illinois, Central

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