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PRESS RELEASE

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Former Government Consultant Pleads Guilty to Bribery and Fraud Scheme

WASHINGTON – John Woods, a consultant and independent contractor for a company that did business with the District of Columbia Department of Human Resources, pled guilty to charges that he paid more than \$140,000 in bribes to a former D.C. government employee and that he stole payments on city contracts that should have gone to his employer.

John Woods, 57, of Sterling, Va., pleaded guilty on August 23 to one count of wire fraud in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. As part of his guilty plea, Woods agreed to pay restitution to the victim in the amount of \$564,910.23. The Honorable Dabney L. Friedrich scheduled sentencing for December 16, 2019.

The announcement was made by U.S. Attorney Jessie K. Liu, Timothy M. Dunham, Special Agent in Charge, Criminal Division, FBI Washington Field Office, and District of Columbia Inspector General Daniel W. Lucas.

According to the statement of offense submitted at the plea hearing, Woods worked as a consultant for a firm identified in the court documents as “Company A.” The firm had agreements with the District of Columbia Department of Human Resources (DCHR) to provide organizational skills training courses and human resources consulting to various D.C. government agencies. Woods was Company A’s main point of contact with DCHR and handled the submission of invoices.

According to the statement of offense, beginning in April 2013, and continuing through August 2017, Woods schemed to defraud “Company A” and the D.C. government.

As noted in the statement of offense, between April 2013 and February 2015, Woods stole \$214,910 in D.C. government checks that were issued to “Company A.” Beginning in

March 2015, Woods began usurping “Company A’s” role under the contracts by purposefully failing to submit Company A’s invoice to DCHR for payment. This led Company A to believe the D.C. government was negligent in paying its invoices, and Company A stopped seeking to perform work under its agreements with DCHR. Woods then secretly performed the agreements without Company A’s knowledge by hiring and retaining contractors to provide the necessary work to DCHR and by submitting fraudulent invoices to DCHR, purportedly on behalf of Company A, for payment under the agreements. DCHR would then issue payments in the form of D.C. government checks made payable to Company A, which Woods deposited into a bank account he controlled. In all, according to the statement of offense, Woods fraudulently deposited approximately 27 checks issued by the D.C. government to “Company A”, totaling approximately \$1,040,023, from March 2015 through August 2017.

According to the statement of offense, in order to keep his scheme in place, Woods paid more than \$140,000 in bribes to Latasha Moore, then a DCHR employee. As a resource allocation analyst for DCHR, Moore was the main point of contact for “Company A” and in a position to ensure that no complaints or suspicions about the contracts reached others in the government. For example, Moore failed to report problems that arose while Woods was managing the work, including complaints of contractors arriving late, leaving early or failing to show up at all for training.

Moore, 38, of Washington, D.C., pled guilty on Oct. 11, 2018, to a federal bribery charge. She is awaiting sentencing.

This case was investigated by the FBI’s Washington Field Office and Office of the Inspector General of the District of Columbia.

In announcing the plea, U.S. Attorney Liu commended the work of Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Marando, who prosecuted the case.

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