



THE UNITED STATES
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United States Attorney's Office
District of Oregon

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**Jury Convicts Former New Jersey Man for Role in Scheme to Defraud
Elderly Oregonian of Savings**

EUGENE, Ore.—A federal jury in Eugene found a former New Jersey man guilty today for his role in a scheme to steal \$1 million from an elderly man residing in Roseburg, Oregon.

Thomas Gerard Mautone, 43, formerly of Newark, New Jersey, was found guilty of four counts of wire fraud.

According to court documents and trial testimony, Mautone was one of five individuals who together perpetrated a monthslong scheme to convince an elderly man to invest \$1 million in a fraudulent high-yield international investment scheme. In July 2015, one of Mautone's co-defendants, Jared Mack, 46, of Utah, made initial contact with the victim, by email, to pitch an investment opportunity claiming to produce weekly returns of 20%. Once the victim expressed interest in the purported investment opportunity, Mack introduced him to Mautone, the supposed connection to investment "platform partner," and later codefendant, Olabode Olukanni, 39, of New York.

For several months, Mautone and his co-defendants maintained frequent contact with the victim and repeatedly attempted to assure him, via a series of increasingly intimidating and pressure-laden communications, of the investment opportunity's legitimacy, low risk, and promised returns. These false representations were made despite Mautone knowing that others had their money stolen by his supposed Hong Kong investment partner, "YangXin Deng."

In December 2015, the victim wired \$1 million to a bank account in Dubai, which was controlled by codefendant Rovshan Bahader Oglu Qasimov, 38, of Azerbaijan. Qasimov immediately withdrew the money and used it to purchase gold from a jewelry store in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The victim never saw his money again, nor did he receive the promised investment returns.

Wire fraud is punishable by up to 20 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine, and three years' supervised release. Mautone will be sentenced on September 8, 2022 by U.S. District Court Judge Michael J. McShane.

Mack, Olukanni, and Qasimov have all pleaded guilty and been sentenced for their roles in the scheme.

U.S. Attorney Scott Erik Asphaug of the District of Oregon made the announcement.

This case was investigated by the FBI. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Gavin W. Bruce and William M. McLaren prosecuted the case.

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