

# **Former Chairman of the Massachusetts Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe charged in superseding indictment**

A federal grand jury in Boston returned a superseding indictment yesterday charging the former Chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe with filing false tax returns. The former Chairman and the owner of an architecture-and-design firm were previously charged in connection with a bribery scheme involving the Tribe's plans to build a resort and casino in Taunton.

Cedric Cromwell, 55, of Attleboro, the former Chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, was charged in a superseding indictment with four counts of filing a false tax return.

In November 2020, Cromwell and David DeQuattro, 54, of Warwick, R.I., were each indicted on two counts of accepting or paying bribes as an agent (or to an agent) of an Indian tribal government and one count of conspiring to commit bribery. Cromwell was also indicted on four counts of extortion under color of official right and one count of conspiring to commit extortion.

According to the superseding indictment, when Cromwell filed his personal income tax returns for tax years 2014 through 2017, he failed to report bribes that he allegedly received from DeQuattro's company, through DeQuattro, in connection with that company's contract to serve as the Tribe's "owner's representative" for the casino project.

Cromwell also failed to report payments for consulting services that he performed for a company that developed and supplied forest carbon offsets, including by partnering with

forest-owning Native American tribes. Cromwell was allegedly paid the consulting income through an intermediary identified as "P-Co.," which was formed by a business associate of Cromwell. The business associate was the only authorized signatory on a bank account identified as the "P-Co. Shell Company Account." Cromwell also allegedly failed to report income to his company One Nation Development, paid through the P.-Co. Shell Company Account and the bank account of a Florida limited partnership, which originated with an investment holding company in Las Vegas.

The only authorized signatory on the investment holding company's bank account was the CEO of a Las Vegas-based architecture firm hired to be the architect for the Tribe's casino project. The superseding indictment alleges that Cromwell failed to report \$39,000 in 2014; \$57,374 in 2015; \$26,884 in 2016; and \$54,134 in 2017, for a total of \$177,393.

The charge of filing a false tax return provides for a sentence of up to three years in prison, one year of supervised release and a fine of \$100,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Boston Field Division; and Ramsey E. Covington, Acting Special Agent in Charge of the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigations in Boston made the announcement. U.S. Attorney Christine Wickers of Mendell's Public Corruption & Special Prosecutions Unit is prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.