

Massachusetts State Trooper Pleads Guilty in Overtime Abuse Investigation

A retired Massachusetts State Police Trooper pleaded guilty on Thursday to collecting over \$29,000 in overtime pay that he did not work.

Paul Cesan, 50, of Southwick, who was previously arrested and charged on June 27, 2018, pleaded guilty to one count of embezzlement from an agency receiving federal funds. U.S. Senior District Court Judge Douglas P. Woodlock scheduled sentencing for March 12, 2019.

Cesan was a Massachusetts State Police (MSP) Trooper assigned to Troop E, which was responsible for enforcing criminal and traffic regulations along the Massachusetts Turnpike, Interstate I-90. In 2016, Cesan earned \$163,533, which included approximately \$50,866 in overtime pay.

Cesan was paid for overtime shifts that he did not work at all or from which he left early. Cesan concealed his fraud by submitting fraudulent citations designed to create the appearance that he had worked overtime hours that he had not, and falsely claimed in MSP paperwork and payroll entries that he had worked the entirety of his overtime shifts.

Cesan has admitted collecting \$29,287 for overtime hours that he did not work.

The overtime in question involved the Accident and Injury Reduction Effort program (AIRE) and the "X-Team" initiative, which were intended to reduce accidents, crashes, and injuries on I-90 through an enhanced presence of MSP Troopers who were to target vehicles traveling at excessive speeds.

In 2016, MSP received annual benefits from the U.S. Department of Transportation in excess of \$10,000, which were funded pursuant to numerous federal grants.

Cesan is the fourth Trooper to plead guilty as a result of the ongoing investigation. On July 2, 2018, former Trooper Gregory Raftery, 47, of Westwood, pleaded guilty, on Sept. 14, 2018, suspended Trooper Kevin Sweeney, 40, of Braintree, pleaded guilty, and on Oct. 11, 2018, suspended Trooper Gary Herman, 45, of Chester, pleaded guilty. Three others have been charged: former Lieutenant David Wilson, 57, of Charlton; retired Trooper Daren DeJong, 56, of Uxbridge; and suspended Trooper Eric Chin.

Pursuant to the plea agreement, the government will recommend a sentence of between 10 and 16 months in prison. The charge of theft of government funds provides for a sentence of no greater than 10 years in prison, three years of supervised release, and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Harold H. Shaw, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division; and Douglas Shoemaker, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General, made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Dustin Chao and Mark Grady of Lelling's Public Corruption Unit are prosecuting the case.

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