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Monday, February 8, 2021

U.S. Attorney's Office in EDVA Recovers \$242 Million in 2020 for Victims and in Criminal and Civil Matters

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – Acting U.S. Attorney Raj Parekh announced today that the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia (EDVA) collected approximately \$242,000,000 in criminal, civil, and asset forfeiture actions in Fiscal Year 2020 on behalf of private and government victims.

“It is an honor to serve with my colleagues in the Eastern District of Virginia, all of whom have supported each other with tremendous resolve as we face the many challenges of the ongoing pandemic together,” said Acting U.S. Attorney Raj Parekh. “Our criminal and civil recovery teams worked tirelessly during a very difficult year to make crime victims whole, use asset forfeiture to reclaim the illicit proceeds of crimes, and protect the public fisc. We will continue our firm commitment to preserving the principles of equality, equity, and justice for all as we uphold victims’ rights and protect our communities throughout 2021 and beyond.”

During FY2020, EDVA recovered approximately \$242 million in criminal matters on behalf of crime victims and in civil matters where federal money was at stake. Of these recoveries, \$22.3 million involved restitution for victims within EDVA’s criminal cases, and \$41.1 million was collected through civil actions and settlements where the federal government was a victim, such as defense procurement fraud, healthcare fraud, and *qui tam* (whistleblower) cases, as well as the collection of agency debts and other related civil enforcement matters. The remaining \$167.9 million was recouped civilly in joint matters with EDVA and the Justice Department’s Civil Division or various Department litigating components, working with other U.S. Attorneys’ Offices and the Virginia Office of the Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

Working with DOJ partner agencies and divisions, EDVA also collected a total of approximately \$10.6 million through asset forfeiture in FY2020. Of that amount,



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EDVA deposited over \$8.3 million into the Justice Department's Assets Forfeiture Fund in FY2020, while the other approximately \$2.3 million was restored or remitted to victims. EDVA also used asset forfeiture statutes and processes to restrain an additional \$13.6 million, which was ultimately returned directly to victims in lieu of forfeiture.

In addition to a team of legal support staff and contractors, EDVA's asset recovery efforts are led by Deputy Chief of the Asset Recovery Unit for Financial Litigation Laura M. Grimes, Deputy Chief of the Asset Recovery Unit for Asset Forfeiture Kevin P. Hudson, Chief of the Asset Recovery Unit Jessica D. Aber, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Janet Jin Ah Lee, Ron Fiorillo, and Annie Zanobini.

Civil recoveries are the result of litigation and debt collection efforts by attorneys, analysts, and contractors supporting the Affirmative Civil Enforcement (ACE) and Civil Rights Enforcement Units. Those efforts are led by ACE Unit Supervisor Gerard Mene and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Ilene Albala, Krista Anderson, Deirdre G. Brou, Robert Coulter, Steve Gordon, Garry Hartlieb, William Hochul, Robert P. McIntosh, Lauren F. Oberheim, Kristin S. Starr, and Clare P. Wuerker.

The U.S. Attorneys' Offices, along with the Department's litigating divisions, are responsible for enforcing and collecting civil and criminal debts owed to the federal government and criminal debts owed to federal crime victims. The law requires defendants to pay restitution to victims of certain federal crimes who have suffered a physical injury or financial loss. Restitution is paid to the victim; criminal fines and felony assessments are paid to the department's Crime Victims Fund, which then distributes the funds collected to federal and state victim compensation and assistance programs.

The largest civil collections were from affirmative civil enforcement cases, in which the United States recovered government money lost to fraud or other misconduct or collected civil penalties imposed on individuals and/or corporations for violations of federal health, safety, civil rights, drug diversion, or environmental laws. In addition, civil debts were collected on behalf of various federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, Internal Revenue Service, Small Business Administration, and Department of Education.

The Justice Department, as a whole, collected more than \$15.9 billion in civil and criminal actions in 2020. This amount is more than five times the approximately \$3.2 billion appropriated budget for all 94 U.S. Attorneys' offices and the main litigating divisions of the Justice Department. The total includes all monies collected through Justice Department-led enforcement actions and negotiated civil settlements. It also includes more than \$13.5 billion in payments made directly to the Justice Department and more than \$2.4 billion in indirect payments made to other federal agencies, states, and other designated recipients.

Topic(s):

Asset Forfeiture
False Claims Act

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Component(s):

USAO - Virginia, Eastern



Megaupload - Release
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