

Press Releases

Office of New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer

Department of Law
120 Broadway
New York, NY 10271

Department of Law
The State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

For More Information:
(518) 473-5525

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GAMBINO CRIME FAMILY "CAPO" AND CREW CHARGED IN ALBANY

Attorney General Eliot Spitzer today announced the unsealing in Albany County of a 92-count indictment charging a reputed Gambino crime family "capo" with enterprise corruption in violation of the Organized Crime Control Act. The indictment charges Joseph "Sonny" Juliano with extensive tax fraud stemming from his multi-million dollar gambling and loan sharking empire. In addition, the grand jury indicted nine other Gambino associates for tax fraud, illegal gambling, and offering false instruments for filing. Four other associates of Juliano are scheduled to be arraigned January 29 in Albany.

The case began when police located small, illegal gambling parlors being run out of legitimate businesses in Brooklyn. Through surveillance, wiretaps, and bugs, investigators painstakingly unraveled a multi-million dollar gambling and loansharking racket run by the top ranks of the Gambino crime family. Detailed financial analysis of the gang's records showed massive tax fraud.

In addition to marking successful cooperation among local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, the grand jury's charges demonstrate the rebirth of a venerable crime control strategy. Commonplace but extremely profitable criminal schemes are particularly amenable to tax prosecutions. The indictment alleges that while the Juliano crew accepted millions of dollars in bets during the past several years, Juliano only declared \$106 of income on his income tax return for the year 2000.

Attorney General Spitzer said, "This case demonstrates a bedrock prosecutorial tenet: follow the money. We followed it from storefronts in Brooklyn to the pockets of the Gambino crime family."

Arthur J. Roth, commissioner of the State Department of Taxation and Finance said: "While there may be a common perception that crime pays, these arrests demonstrate our collective resolve to bringing organized crime to its knees. Of all the crimes committed by Al Capone and other legendary mobsters, it was violation of tax laws that often proved to be their downfall."

Waterfront Commissioners Michael C. Axelrod of New York and Michael M. Madonna of New Jersey issued a joint statement, saying: "This case presents yet another instance of the Waterfront Commission's concerted efforts with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to disrupt the influence of organized criminal activities in the metropolitan area. From its inception in 1953, the Waterfront Commission viewed gambling, especially on the docks, as a cash cow for organized crime."

The investigation was led by the New York State Attorney General's Organized Crime Task Force, working in conjunction with the New York City Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance, the Staten Island District Attorney's Office,

the New York City/New Jersey Waterfront Commission, and the Inspector General of the United States Department of Labor.

The first indictment alleges that:

- Joseph "Sonny" Juliano, 65, of 2057 80th St, Brooklyn;

violated the Organized Crime Control Act. He was arraigned today before the Honorable Thomas A. Breslin in Albany County Court and charged with one count of Enterprise Corruption for his role in operating a multi-million dollar gambling ring and failing to report gambling income on his personal income tax returns. He is charged with a Class "B" Felony punishable by up to 25 years in prison.

Juliano pleaded not guilty and is being held in Albany County Jail pending release on \$250,000 bail.

The second indictment alleges that various associates of Juliano ran the day-to-day operations of the gambling ring by collecting bets from individual bettors and funneling the money to Juliano on a weekly basis. These associates are charged with promoting gambling and with tax crimes for failing to report the income they derived from the gambling ring.

Under the second indictment:

- Robert DeCicco, 52, of 1950 Clove Road, Staten Island;
- Anthony Rucireto, 77, of 2257 84th St., Brooklyn;
- Stephen Preziotti, 35, of 815 Neck Road, Brooklyn;
- Edwin "Rocky" Lederkramer, 77, of 2630 Cropsey Ave., Brooklyn;
- Vincent "Junior" D'Amore, 75, of 1749 Bay Ridge Parkway, Brooklyn;
- Oliver Bolino, 72, of 2124 81st St., Brooklyn;
- Joseph "Joe King" Pallonetti, 51, of 19 Mallow St., Staten Island;
- Louis Loconte, 54, of 87 Vincent Ave., Staten Island; and,
- Thomas "Tommy Fish" Sentina, 48, of 245 Grasmere Drive, Staten Island,

were arraigned before the Honorable Stephen Herrick, in Albany County Court. They were each charged with Tax Fraud, with Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, and with Promoting Gambling in the First Degree. The crimes are Class "E" felonies punishable by up to four years in prison.

All the defendants pleaded not guilty.

Anthony Rucierito, Edwin Lederkramer, Vincent D'Amore, and Oliver Bolino were released on their own recognizance pending further court action.

Robert DeCicco is being held in Albany County Jail pending \$20,000 bail.
Stephen Preziotti is being held in Albany County Jail pending \$10,000 bail.
Joseph Pallonetti is being held in Albany County Jail pending \$10,000 bail.
Louis Loconte is being held in Albany County Jail pending \$7,500 bail.
Thomas Sentina is being held in Albany County Jail pending \$5,000 bail.

An additional Julian associate, Michael "Mikey Nerves" Ciffarella, 54, of 8800 20th Ave. Brooklyn; was arrested today in Florida and is awaiting extradition to New York to face charges for his role in the gambling operation.

Four other Juliano associates:

- Louise Mancuso, 55, of 8800 20th Ave. Brooklyn;
- Carl Surico, 65, of 1357 77th St., Brooklyn;
- Fred Herstat, 55, of 57 Avenue O, Brooklyn; and,
- Christopher Sorrentino, 43, of 47 Hemlock St., Staten Island,

were arrested today and are being held in Albany County Jail pending their scheduled arraignments January 29 for their roles in the gambling operation.

All defendants are due to appear in court February 4.

The case is being handled by Assistant Deputy Attorney General Mark Fitzmaurice and Senior Investigator George Pagnotta of the New York State Attorney General's Organized Crime Task Force.

The indictments are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.
