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District of Nebraska

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, April 1, 2016

Omaha Woman Sentenced for Wire Fraud

United States Attorney Deborah R. Gilg announced that on April 1, 2016, Patricia Walker-Halstead of Omaha, Nebraska, age 70, was sentenced for wire fraud. The Honorable Joseph F. Bataillon, Senior United States District Court Judge, sentenced Walker-Halstead to a term of twelve (12) months and one (1) day imprisonment. After her release from prison, Walker-Halstead will begin a term of supervised release of 2 years. Walker-Halstead was also ordered to make restitution in the amount of \$500,000.

An investigation conducted by the United States Secret Service and the Nebraska State Patrol determined that from March, 2011, and continuing through November, 2012, Walker-Halstead transmitted false and fraudulent email communications as part of a scheme to obtain money. During this time period Walker-Halstead operated a private investigation company named Walker Investigations. The scheme arose out of Walker-Halstead's professional relationship with a client who hired Walker Investigations to provide investigative work to the client.

Between March, 2011, and continuing through November, 2012, Walker-Halstead sent email communication to the client which appeared as though they were sent from an Investigator named "Scott." Walker-Halstead represented to the client that "Scott" worked for the Nebraska State Patrol and was assisting with investigative work being performed by Walker Investigations. Emails sent by Walker-Halstead to the client suggested "Scott" was having financial troubles related to medical expenses, legal expenses, business expenses, and personal expenses and that "Scott" needed the client's financial assistance. As a result of the emails, Walker-Halstead obtained \$500,000 in numerous payments which she represented was then given to "Scott" to assist with his financial needs. Investigators confirmed "Scott" was a person made up by Walker-Halstead and who has never existed. Money received by Walker-Halstead for the purported benefit of "Scott" was used by Walker-Halstead for her personal benefit.

The Court determined that the loss amount relating to the scheme totaled \$500,000.

This case was investigated by the United States Secret Service and the Nebraska State Patrol.