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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, June 19, 2018

Consultant To Real Estate Developers Pleads Guilty In White Plains Federal Court To Conspiracy To Corrupt The Electoral Process In Bloomingburg

Geoffrey S. Berman, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that VOLVY SMILOWITZ, a/k/a "Zev Smilowitz," pled guilty yesterday to conspiracy to corrupt the electoral process, in connection with an election in Bloomingburg, New York. SMILOWITZ pled guilty before United States District Judge Vincent Briccetti in White Plains federal court.

U.S. Attorney Geoffrey S. Berman stated: "In the biggest federal voter fraud case in the modern era, Volvy Smilowitz admitted to taking part in a cynical scheme to rig an election in Bloomingburg. There is no place in our democracy for the criminal conduct admitted to by the defendant, which included falsely registering dozens of voters. Those who conspire to corrupt the electoral process must and will be held accountable."

According to the allegations contained in the Indictment, as well as statements made in related court filings and proceedings:

Starting in 2006, VOLVY SMILOWITZ, a consultant, and Shalom Lamm and Kenneth Nakdimen, real estate developers, sought to build and sell real estate in Bloomingburg, New York. From these real estate development projects, SMILOWITZ, Lamm, Nakdimen, and others hoped for and anticipated making hundreds of millions of dollars. But by late 2013, the first of their real estate developments had met local opposition, and still remained under construction and uninhabitable. When met with resistance, rather than seek to advance their real estate development project through legitimate means, SMILOWITZ, Lamm, and Nakdimen instead decided to corrupt the democratic electoral process in Bloomingburg by falsely registering voters and paying bribes for voters who would help elect public officials favorable to their project.

Specifically, in advance of an election in March 2014 for Mayor of Bloomingburg and other local officials, SMILOWITZ, Lamm, Nakdimen, and others developed and worked on a plan to falsely register numerous people who were not entitled to register and vote in Bloomingburg because they actually lived elsewhere. Those people included some who never intended to live in Bloomingburg, some who had never kept a home in Bloomingburg, and indeed, some who had never set foot in Bloomingburg in their lives. SMILOWITZ, Lamm, and Nakdimen took steps to cover up their scheme to register voters who did not actually live in Bloomingburg by, among other things, creating and back-dating false leases and placing items like

toothbrushes and toothpaste in unoccupied apartments to make it seem as if the falsely registered voters lived there.

SMILOWITZ and Lamm also bribed potential voters by offering payments, subsidies, and other items of value to get non-residents of Bloomingburg to register unlawfully and vote there.

* * *

SMILOWITZ, 29, of Monroe, New York, pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to corrupt the electoral process, which carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison. The maximum potential sentence in this case is prescribed by Congress and is provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the judge.

SMILOWITZ's sentencing is scheduled for October 24, 2018, at 11:30 a.m.

Mr. Berman praised the outstanding investigative work of the FBI-Hudson Valley White Collar Crime Task Force, the Sullivan County District Attorney's Office, the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office, the Orange County Sheriff's Office, the Orange County District Attorney's Office, the Internal Revenue Service, and the United States Postal Inspection Service. Mr. Berman also thanked the Department of Justice's Public Integrity Section, Election Crimes Branch, for its assistance in the case.

This case is being handled by the Office's White Plains Division. Assistant United States Attorneys Kathryn Martin, Benjamin Allee, and Perry Carbone are in charge of the prosecution.

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