



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
EASTERN DISTRICT *of* LOUISIANA

[U.S. Attorneys](#) » [Eastern District of Louisiana](#) » [News](#)

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Eastern District of Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, August 6, 2020

New Orleans Man Pleads Guilty To Conspiring To Stage Automobile Accidents In Order To Defraud Insurance and Trucking Companies

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA – United States Attorney Peter G. Strasser announced that **DAMIAN LABEAUD** (“**LABEAUD**”), age 48, of New Orleans, entered a plea of guilty today to Conspiracy to Commit Wire Fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371, arising out of staged automobile accidents with tractor-trailers occurring in New Orleans.

According to today's guilty plea, **LABEAUD**, along with his co-conspirators and others, beginning at a time unknown and continuing through the present, conspired to commit wire fraud in connection with staged accidents, including two that occurred on June 6, 2017, and June 12, 2017. Previously, on January, 30, 2020 and May 28, 2020, six of **LABEAUD**'s codefendants (Mario Solomon, Larry Williams, Lucinda Thomas, Mary Wade, Judy Williams, and Dashontae Young) all tendered guilty pleas and admitted to their knowing participation in a scheme to stage automobile accidents in the New Orleans area in an effort to defraud insurance and trucking companies.

Today, **LABEAUD** admitted to acting as the driver, or “slammer,” in both the June 6 and the June 12 staged automobile accidents alleged in the Superseding Indictment. As the “slammer,” **LABEAUD** intentionally caused the collisions with the 18-wheeler tractor-trailers. After the accidents, **LABEAUD** immediately exited the vehicles in which he had staged the accidents and fled the scene with the help of a codefendant who was acting as a “spotter,” or driver of a getaway car. **LABEAUD**'s codefendants received a total of \$43,000.00 as a result of the fraudulent lawsuits that were filed on their behalf for the June 6 and June 12 accidents.

According to today's guilty plea, **LABEAUD** staged numerous accidents for various attorneys, including at least 40 staged accidents with 18-wheeler tractor-trailers for Attorney A. Per their agreement, after each staged accident, **LABEAUD** would connect the passengers in the staged accidents with Attorney A so that Attorney A could represent them in conjunction with the accident. Attorney A would then pay **LABEAUD** \$1,000.00 for every passenger that was involved in a staged accident with an 18-wheeler tractor-trailer. Attorney A would either pay **LABEAUD** an advance, or would pay him for the accidents soon after they were staged. Attorney A knew that **LABEAUD** was staging the accidents and the two would often discuss the accidents either in person or over the phone, through calls or text messages.

LABEAUD faces a maximum sentence of five (5) years. Upon release from prison, **LABEAUD** also faces a term of supervised release up to (3) three years, and/or a fine of \$250,000 or the greater of twice the gross gain to each defendant or twice the gross loss to any person under Title 18, United States Code, Section 371. Sentencing in this matter is scheduled for November 19, 2020, at 2:00 p.m., before U.S. District Judge Eldon Fallon.

The U.S. Attorney's Office would also like to acknowledge the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Louisiana State Police, and the Metropolitan Crime Commission with this matter. The prosecution of this case is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Brian M. Klebba, Supervisor of the Financial Crimes Unit; Assistant U.S. Attorney Shirin Hakimzadeh; Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward Rivera; and Assistant U.S. Attorney Maria Carboni.

* * *

Attachment(s):

[Download labeaud_damian_factual_basis_.pdf](#)

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

[Federal Bureau of Investigation \(FBI\)](#)

[USAO - Louisiana, Eastern](#)

Updated August 6, 2020