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Two Ohio Women Charged with Illegally Intercepting School Officials' E-mails and Illegally Possessing User Names and Passwords

Gregory A. White, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, announced today that a federal grand jury in Cleveland, Ohio, returned an indictment charging Tammy Houston, age 36, of Dennison, Ohio, and Tammy R. Harrison, age 34, of Port Washington, Ohio, with one count of illegally intercepting electronic and wire communications and one count of possessing 15 or more unauthorized access devices.

Count 1 of the indictment charges that between August 10, 2006, and November 29, 2006, Houston and Harrison intentionally intercepted, endeavored to intercept, and aided and abetted the interception and endeavor to intercept, certain wire and electronic communications, specifically E-Mail messages of administrators and employees of the Indian Valley Local School District located in Tuscarawas County, Ohio. Count 2 of the indictment charges that between on or about August 10, 2006 and on or about January 23, 2007, Houston and Harrison possessed, and aided and abetted the possession, of 15 or more unauthorized access devices, specifically computer user names and passwords, with the intent to defraud.

If convicted, the defendants' sentences will be determined by the Court after review of factors unique to this case, including the defendants' prior criminal records, if any, the defendants' role in the offense and the characteristics of the violation. In all cases the sentence will not exceed the statutory maximum and in most cases it will be less than the maximum.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert W. Kern of the Cleveland U.S. Attorney's Office, following a joint investigation by the Canton Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Tuscarawas County Sheriff's Department.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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