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Akron Man Sentenced to a Mandatory 9 Years in Prison for Food Stamp Fraud

AKRON, Ohio (Thursday, May 28, 2015) – Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that Summit County Common Pleas Court Judge Amy Corrigan-Jones sentenced Johnnie Byrd III, 45, of Frederick Boulevard in Akron, to nine years in prison for Food Stamp Fraud. The court further ordered the nine year sentence would be a mandatory term, meaning Byrd cannot request any type of early release. Byrd was also ordered to pay \$773,985 dollars to the State of Ohio for restitution and reimbursement.

“Johnnie Byrd stole money from those who needed it the most. His greed not only led to him going to prison, but also sent his mother into bankruptcy,” said Prosecutor Walsh. “I hope this sends a strong message that we will hold people accountable when they prey on others.”

On May 20, 2015, Byrd was found guilty of the following charges:

- Engaging in Pattern of Corrupt Activity – a felony of the first degree
- Grand Theft – a felony of the second degree
- Money Laundering – a felony of the third degree
- Telecommunications Fraud – a felony of the fifth degree
- Illegal Use of Food Stamps – a felony of the fifth degree

Byrd operated Byrd's House Inc. at 1243 Andrus Street in Akron. Between October 2009 and March 2012, Byrd stole over \$1 million dollars in food subsidies. Byrd used customers' state supplied food benefits cards and billed Ohio for bogus purchases. Byrd would then give the customer cash, usually about half of what he charged the State of Ohio.