

For Immediate Release
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Warren County Resident Sentencing for Securities Fraud and Money Laundering

(POMEROY, Ohio) – A Warren County man was sentenced Thursday for his role in soliciting two Meigs County residents to invest more than \$1 million in several businesses.

Meigs County Judge Linda Warner sentenced Aaron Pitman to 90 days in the Meigs County jail followed by five years of community control. As part of a plea agreement, Pitman was ordered to pay \$300,000 in restitution to one of the victims. If he violates conditions of community control, he could serve 10 years in prison.

Pitman pleaded guilty in October 2020 to one count of securities fraud and one count of misrepresentation in the sale of securities, both first-degree felonies, and four counts of money laundering, all third-degree felonies. He was indicted by a Meigs County grand jury in June 2019 after a criminal referral by the Ohio Department of Commerce's Division of Securities and the Ohio Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation.

On Dec. 14, 2020, the Ohio Division of Securities issued an administrative order against Pitman, with consent, which included a lifetime ban on the sale of securities, as defined in the order.

Pitman, a Mason resident, solicited two Meigs County residents to invest in several businesses engaged in the purchase and development of website domains. Pitman laundered investor money through accounts held in the name of a business owned and operated by George "Roderick" Hammons, of Denver, Colorado. The money then was funneled to various businesses and personal accounts maintained by Hammons and Pitman.

Hammons was indicted with Pitman for his role in the scheme. He pleaded guilty to money laundering and was sentenced Feb. 25 to five years of community control and ordered to pay \$10,000 in restitution.

This case was prosecuted by the Office of Meigs County Prosecutor James Stanley.

Before investing, the Division of Securities encourages potential investors to call the Division's Investor Protection Hotline at 877-683-7841 to ask:

- Is the brokerage firm and salesperson licensed to sell securities in Ohio?
- Have any enforcement actions been taken against them?
- Has the security been properly registered with the Division of Securities?

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