

"Mr. Social Security" Eric Conn Facing More Charges



Summary: The ex-fugitive attorney Eric Conn has been charged with the charges dropped as part of the original plea deal that he broke by fleeing.

Fugitive attorney Eric Conn spent six months on the run before getting caught in Central America. The Kentucky lawyer, facing a slew of charges, took off in an attempt to avoid prison time for his expansive Social Security fraud scheme. According to newly filed court papers by a federal prosecutor, the government is trying Conn on over 12 charges of mail fraud, wire fraud, money laundering and more.

A SWAT team captured Conn, 57, as he was walking out of a Honduras restaurant. They flew him back to the United States for a court appearance the next day in Lexington. If Conn is convicted, he could spend the rest of his life behind bars. If he had kept the plea deal he made with the government, Conn could have avoided the charges. However, he cut off his electronic monitoring device while on home detention awaiting his sentence so he could flee across the border in June. He used the excuse that he was going to meet with his attorney and prosecutors while in Lexington, Kentucky, allowing him the chance to get in a truck provided by an accomplice.

His attorney, Scott White, told reporters that he assumed federal prosecutors would add on more charges that were originally dropped as part of the plea deal. While White did not respond to requests for additional comments, he simply noted that he is "looking closely" at a motion to dismiss the addition of the original charges.

Conn had pleaded guilty in March to bribing a judge and stealing from the government. His Social Security fraud scheme stole over \$500 million from the government. The courts sentenced Conn for his role in the scheme during the summer even though he was absent from the hearing. He was sentenced to a 12-year term which he is currently serving.

Conn is scheduled for trial in February for the charges of escape and failure to appear, which were outlined in an indictment unsealed during his time missing. Prosecutors want that trial to go forward and will try him on the additional charges later.

"Mr. Social Security" started his law practice in 1993 from a trailer. He used outrageous TV commercials to gain notoriety in addition to installing several small-scale replicas of monuments like the Statue of Liberty and Lincoln Memorial at his eastern Kentucky office. His clients involved those claiming Social Security benefits.

His scheme fell apart when it was discovered that he was bribing a doctor and judge to get disability claims approved using fake medical evidence.

Do you think life behind bars is a fair sentence for the crimes Conn has committed including bribery and escaping? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

To learn more about the ongoing case, read these articles:

- [FBI Believes Eric C. Conn Had Help Escaping Home Detention](#)
- [Eric Conn's Escape to Mexico Brings Added Charges](#)
- ["Conn-Attorney" Pleads Guilty to Fake Disability Benefits Scheme](#)

Photo: cbsnews.com