

***State of New Jersey  
Commission of Investigation***



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**SCI ASSISTS N.Y. POLICE, FBI  
IN MAJOR NATIONAL GAMBLING,  
MONEY LAUNDERING BUSTS**

TRENTON – Special Agents of the New Jersey State Commission of Investigation participated in the takedown Wednesday of a multi-million-dollar nationwide gambling operation involving illicit sports betting and money laundering whose principals were taken into custody during coordinated early morning raids in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Nevada and California.

A New York State grand jury indictment obtained by the Queens County, N.Y., District Attorney's Office charged 225 counts of enterprise corruption, promotion of gambling and money laundering involving 25 individuals, four of whom were arrested in New Jersey.

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown, joined by New York City Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, Acting Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of investigation Mary E. Galligan and representatives of other law enforcement agencies from across the country announced the indictments in New York this morning.

The defendants, including two owners of a sports betting Internet website, are charged with operating an illegal sports betting enterprise in Queens County and elsewhere that profited by more than \$50 million during an 18-month period by accepting wagers on various sporting events – including horse racing and professional and college football, basketball, hockey and baseball.

Those arrested include Andrew Belardino, 50, of Upper Freehold, Monmouth County, who was taken into custody at his home early Wednesday by SCI agents working in conjunction with New York City Police Department detectives, agents and personnel of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and an investigator for the Monmouth County Prosecutor’s Office. Also arrested was Daniel Belardino, 58, of Fair Lawn, N.J., Andrew’s brother, who was taken into custody by the SCI at a separate location in Hamilton Township, Mercer County.

According to the indictment, Andrew Belardino was one of 15 defendants charged as “bookmakers” who were responsible for overseeing “agents” whose job was to recruit a clientele of bettors who would regularly place wagers with the enterprise. The indictment charges that Daniel Belardino was employed as a “collector” or “bank” to handle the illegal flow of money between the bookmakers and agents.

The arrests were the culmination of a wide-ranging investigation, “Operation World Wide Wagers,” led by the New York City Police Department’s Organized Crime Investigation Division. The SCI was among a number of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies asked by NYPD to assist with the investigation beginning early last year.

In addition to the arrests, dozens of search warrants and asset seizure warrants were executed in multiple jurisdictions in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Nevada and California, resulting in the seizure, to date, of more than \$7.6 million in cash and gambling chips.

In addition to the SCI, the arrests and/or warrants were carried out by the New York City Police Department’s Organized Crime Investigation Division, the FBI’s Asset Forfeiture Section, the Nevada Gaming Control Board, the New Jersey Attorney General’s Office, the Pennsylvania State Police and the Los Angeles Police Department.

“Every law enforcement agency that took part in the conduct and successful conclusion of this investigation is to be commended,” said SCI Chairman Patrick E. Hobbs. “This was a highly coordinated effort, and it demonstrates the effective impact of interstate and multi-agency cooperation among law enforcement agencies in rooting out the criminal element. The SCI is proud to have played a part.”

**ADDITIONAL CONTACTS:**

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*The State Commission of Investigation is an independent New Jersey watchdog agency established in 1968 to investigate organized crime and corruption, waste of tax money and other abuses of the public trust. Copies of reports are available at the Commission's offices or via its Web site at [www.state.nj.us/sci](http://www.state.nj.us/sci).*