



# Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2018  
[WWW.JUSTICE.GOV](http://WWW.JUSTICE.GOV)

CRM  
(202) 514-2007  
TTY (866) 544-5309

**FORMER ARKANSAS STATE JUDGE SENTENCED TO PRISON  
FOR DISMISSING CASES IN EXCHANGE FOR PERSONAL BENEFITS  
AND TAMPERING WITH A WITNESS**

WASHINGTON—A former Arkansas state judge was sentenced to five years in prison for perpetrating a seven-year-long fraud and bribery scheme in which he dismissed pending cases in exchange for personal benefits, including sexually related conduct, and then bribed a witness in an attempt to obstruct an official investigation into the scheme. Acting Assistant Attorney General John P. Cronan of the Justice Department's Criminal Division made the announcement.

O. Joseph Boeckmann, 71, of Wynne, Arkansas, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Kristine G. Baker of the Eastern District of Arkansas. Judge Baker also ordered the defendant to serve three years of supervised release following his prison sentence and pay a fine of \$50,000, to account for the financial harm he caused through his fraud scheme.

According to admissions in his plea agreement, from 2009 to 2015, Boeckmann corruptly used his official position as a district judge for the First Judicial Circuit of Arkansas to dismiss traffic citations and misdemeanor criminal charges for young men in exchange for acts that he claimed were "community service," but which actually benefited Boeckmann himself. Boeckmann took official action to order these individuals to perform "community service" and used his access to these individuals during their purported "community service" to take photographs of them in compromising positions. In other cases, Boeckmann dismissed pending charges against defendants in exchange for sexually related conduct.

Boeckmann, who pleaded guilty to wire fraud and witness tampering in October 2017, admitted that the corrupt use of his office defrauded the State of Arkansas and its citizens of their right to Boeckmann's honest services and also defrauded various cities and counties in Arkansas, as well as the State of Arkansas and the Arkansas courts, of money and property that they should have received as fines or fees from the individuals whose cases were fraudulently dismissed.

Boeckmann also admitted that during his scheme, he instructed various individuals not to tell anyone about their "community service" sentences. Then, after Boeckmann learned he was under investigation, he tampered with at least one witness in an attempt to keep his scheme secret. Specifically, in the fall of 2015, Boeckmann learned of a witness who had provided information to the Arkansas Judicial Discipline and Disability Commission (JJDC) regarding Boeckmann's practice of imposing personally beneficial "community service"

sentences. Boeckmann directed another individual to pay the witness to write a letter recanting the information the witness gave to the JDDC. According to his own admissions, Boeckmann did this in order to prevent that witness from providing truthful information about Boeckmann to law enforcement and to influence, delay and prevent that witness's testimony in an official proceeding.

The FBI investigated this case with assistance of the Arkansas State Police and the JDDC. Trial Attorneys Peter Halpern, Jonathan Kravis and Simon Cataldo of the Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section prosecuted the case, with assistance from Special Prosecutor Jack McQuary of the State of Arkansas Office of the Prosecutor Coordinator.

# # #