



# NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General  
**Catherine Leahy Scott**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 16, 2016  
Contact [John Milgrim](#): 518-474-1010

## **FORMER SYRACUSE POLICE SERGEANT WHO WAS ALSO EMPLOYED AS A PART-TIME STATE BANKING INSPECTOR PLEADS GUILTY TO WAGE THEFT**

*Thomas J. Connellan Admits Grand Larceny and Pays State More Than \$32,500 Restitution for  
Turning Banking Position into a No-Show Job for at Least Four Years*

*Investigative Findings Referred to State Comptroller with Recommendation to Recalculate Any  
Pension Benefits Based on Unearned Income*

SYRACUSE – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott and Onondaga County District Attorney William J. Fitzpatrick today announced the guilty plea of former Syracuse Police Sergeant and part-time State banking inspector Thomas J. Connellan for stealing more than \$32,500 in unearned wages from the State by claiming to have worked when he in fact didn't show up for the job. Simultaneous to the plea, Inspector General Leahy Scott referred her investigation's findings to the State Comptroller's Office with a recommendation they recalculate Connellan's pension benefits based on him rarely showing up for his State banking job for at least the past four years.

Connellan, 50, pleaded guilty today in Onondaga County Court to Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a felony, for stealing State wages by filing hundreds of reports falsely indicating he was performing his part-time job with the State Department of Financial Services as an Automated Teller Machine ("ATM") inspector when in fact he frequently did not perform the work. Connellan, at his plea hearing today, paid \$32,561 restitution to the State for earnings he received but was not entitled to.

"As a former high-profile law enforcement officer, this criminal defendant corrupted his positions in public service, violated the trust placed in him and may have accumulated additional pension credits that he absolutely does not deserve," said **Inspector General Leahy Scott**. "He has now reimbursed the State for his unearned income and I will work to ensure that New York taxpayers will not be burdened with public pension payments based on any credits he did not truly deserve. I will also continue using all of the resources at my disposal to vigorously pursue anyone who defrauds the State and steals from taxpayers."

"I would like to commend the Inspector General on their work regarding this investigation," said **District Attorney Fitzpatrick**. "Our office will continue to work with the Inspector General to prosecute this type of fraud and protect the taxpayers' money."

Inspector General Leahy Scott's investigation found that between January 1, 2011 and June 30, 2015, Connellan

submitted hundreds of falsified ATM inspection reports in order to conceal the fact that he neglected to perform his State duties, thereby receiving at least \$32,561.16 in salary that he was not entitled to.

As a part-time State ATM inspector, Connellan was required to conduct daytime and nighttime ATM safety inspections on bank ATM machines located throughout central New York. During the daytime he was required to review the surveillance video in the bank to ensure it was properly capturing the area around the ATM and that the bank was maintaining the video as required by the ATM Safety Act in State Banking Law. Upon completing each inspection, Connellan was required to submit an ATM inspection report to the State which included the date, time, bank representative name, and inspection results.

A review of ATM inspection reports found that hundreds filed by Connellan were false, and no inspection occurred at the time and place he indicated. Often, it was found, Connellan falsely reported performing an ATM inspection for the State when he was in fact on duty for the Syracuse Police Department. Moreover, Connellan never advised his superiors at the police department that he had a part-time job with the State, as department policy required.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked Onondaga District Attorney Fitzpatrick and his office for their assistance with the investigation and the prosecution of this matter.

###