



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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Contact [John Milgrim](#): 518-474-1010

FORMER STATE DOT ENGINEER-IN-CHARGE INDICTED ON FEDERAL CHARGE OF USING HIS POSITION TO STEAL EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES FROM GOVERNMENT PROJECT

ALBANY - New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott and United States Attorney for the Northern District of New York Grant C. Jaquith today announced the federal indictment of a former State Department of Transportation (“DOT”) engineer who used his position overseeing a road rehabilitation project in the North Country to obtain thousands of dollars’ worth of equipment and services from the construction company for his own personal use, items that were ultimately paid for as if they were part of the state and federally funded road project.

Jerome Lauzon, 44, of Gansevoort, was arraigned today on a federal grand jury indictment charging a violation of 18 United States Code §§ 666(a)(1)(A) Theft Concerning a Program Receiving Federal Funds.

Lauzon, a former Professional Engineer 1 at the DOT, was accused of using his position as engineer-in-charge on a \$10.5 million highway rehabilitation project in Saratoga and Washington Counties to have the construction company give him power equipment and services for his own personal use, which he in turn reimbursed the company using government funds. The Federal Highway Administration provided 80 percent of the funding for the rehabilitation project.

“This defendant scorned his commitment to public service and corrupted a multi-million dollar government highway project to enrich himself at taxpayer expense,” said **Inspector General Leahy Scott**. “I will continue to use the resources of my office and successful law enforcement partnerships to pursue anyone who abdicates their responsibility to the public trust.”

Lauzon pleaded guilty last year to a State charge of Official Misconduct in a related case and resigned from State employment at the time.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found that between late 2012 and 2014, Lauzon used his position to have the construction company buy him numerous items for his own personal use including a laptop computer and other computing equipment, snow-blower, lawn mower, pressure washer, paint sprayer and car repairs worth nearly \$10,000. Lauzon further went on to falsify records on the project to make it appear as though all of those purchases were legitimate costs associated with the road rehabilitation project, and therefore passing the costs of the purchases to New York State, which reimbursed the company pursuant to terms of the road project contract. All of the items, however, were delivered to or remained at Lauzon’s home and were never used for the State’s road project.

The federal charge is based on an investigation that also included the United States Department of Transportation’s Office of Inspector General and allegations of wrongdoing spanning from 2012 to 2017.

Lauzon was arraigned on the federal charge in the United States District Court for the Northern District of New York in Albany and released pending further court action. The charge carries a maximum potential sentence of 10 years in prison and \$250,000 fine if convicted.

The investigation is continuing.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Department of Transportation and the United States Department of Transportation Office of the Inspector General for their assistance with the investigation, and United States Attorney for the Northern District Grant C. Jaquith and his office for prosecuting this matter.

The charges are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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