

USAID Official, Three Corporate Executives Plead Guilty to Decade-Long Bribery Scheme Involving Over \$550 Million in Contracts: DOJ

GP thegatewaypundit.com/2025/06/usaaid-official-three-corporate-executives-plead-guilty-decade/

Jun. 13, 2025 6:40 pm



A USAID official and three government contractors pleaded guilty to a decade-long bribery scheme involving over \$550 million in contracts, according to the Justice Department.

According to court documents, beginning in 2013, USAID official Roderick Wilson agreed with corporate executive Darryl Britt to receive bribes in exchange for Watson's influence to award contracts to a small business named Apprio and its subcontractor Vistant.

Watson received more than \$1 million in bribes to steer no-bid contracts to Apprio and Vistant.

A race-based government program that allowed 'socially and economically disadvantaged businesses' to bid on contracts made this massive scheme possible.

"As a certified small business under the SBA 8(a) contracting program, which helps socially and economically disadvantaged businesses, Apprio could access lucrative federal contracting opportunities through set-asides and sole-source contracts exclusively available to eligible contractors without a competitive bid process," the DOJ said.

Per the DOJ:

Four men, including a government contracting officer for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and three owners and presidents of companies, have pleaded guilty for their roles in a decade-long bribery scheme involving at least 14 prime contracts worth over \$550 million in U.S. taxpayer dollars.

- Roderick Watson, 57, of Woodstock, Maryland, who worked as a USAID contracting officer, pleaded guilty to bribery of a public official;
- Walter Barnes, 46, of Potomac, Maryland, who was the owner and president of PM Consulting Group LLC doing business as Vistant (Vistant), a certified small business under the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 8(a) contracting program, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bribery of a public official and securities fraud;
- Darryl Britt, 64, of Myakka City, Florida, who was the owner and president of Apprio, Inc. (Apprio), a certified small business under the SBA 8(a) contracting program, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bribery of a public official; and
- Paul Young, 62, of Columbia, Maryland, who was the president of a subcontractor to Vistant and Apprio, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit bribery of a public official.

“The defendants sought to enrich themselves at the expense of American taxpayers through bribery and fraud,” said Matthew R. Galeotti, Head of the Justice Department’s Criminal Division. “Their scheme violated the public trust by corrupting the federal government’s procurement process. Anybody who cares about good and effective government should be concerned about the waste, fraud, and abuse in government agencies, including USAID. Those who engage in bribery schemes to exploit the U.S. Small Business Administration’s vital economic programs for small businesses — whether individuals or corporations acting through them — will be held to account.”

“Watson was entrusted to serve the interests of the American people — not his own — and his criminal actions for his own personal gain undermine the integrity of our public institutions,” said U.S. Attorney Kelly O. Hayes for the District of Maryland. “Public trust is a hallmark of our nation’s values, so corruption within a federal government agency is intolerable. This office, along with our law enforcement partners, will continue to pursue and prosecute corruption at every level to ensure accountability and protect public trust.”