



Joel E. Abelove
District Attorney

**OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF RENSSELAER**

RENSSELAER COUNTY COURTHOUSE
TROY, NEW YORK 12180
(518) 270-4040



For Release: May 23, 2016

Contact: Jonathan Desso, (518) 270-4028

TROY BUSINESS OWNER PLEADS GUILTY TO EBT FRAUD

Rensselaer County District Attorney Joel E. Abelove announced today that Ralph F. Renna, age 57, owner of Broadway News, 207 Broadway, Troy, plead guilty to (1) count of Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, a class E felony. This was the result of a several-month-long investigation by the Rensselaer County Department of Social Services, the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office, and federal investigators.

The defendant's illegal conduct lasted from January 1, 2010, through December 31, 2015, where the defendant used his business to steal \$152,294.56 in EBT card benefits. Mr. Renna told police that he would provide cash, cigarettes and other prohibited items to EBT card holders who came to his store from eight different counties throughout the state. The defendant pocketed between 10 to 25 percent on each fraudulent transaction.

As a result of the plea, the defendant will be sentenced to five (5) years probation, community service, and full restitution. As part of his plea agreement, Mr. Renna will be required to pay \$50,000.00 in restitution prior to his sentencing. The defendant is scheduled to be sentenced on July 18, 2016, at the Rensselaer County Courthouse, by the Honorable Debra J. Young.

Abelove said, "Special recognition goes to former Rensselaer County DSS Investigator Kimberly Sala, who, along with the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office and the District Attorney's Office Investigation Unit, brought this defendant to justice. My office will continue to crack down on those who seek to defraud the taxpayers of Rensselaer County."

Assistant District Attorney Carl Rosenkranz prosecuted the case.

Defendant: Ralph F. Renna
DOB: 09/06/1958
Address: 441 4th Avenue, Troy, NY

#####