

Beat: News

Houston Man Sentenced for Stealing \$230,000 from Bank ATMs

In Missouri and Michigan

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USPA NEWS - A Houston, Texas, man was sentenced in federal court today for stealing more than \$230,000 from bank ATMs in Kansas City, Mo., and Allen Park, Michigan.

Deandre J. Gilliam, 20, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Stephen R. Bough to three years and one month in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered Gilliam to pay \$218,835 in restitution to JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A.

On Jan. 6, Gilliam pleaded guilty to one count of aiding and abetting bank theft. He also pleaded guilty to one count of aiding and abetting the possession and concealment of money stolen from a bank, which was a case transferred from the Eastern District of Michigan.

Gilliam admitted that he and his co-conspirators broke into and stole \$150,200 from the Chase Bank ATM located at 1614 E. 63rd Street in Kansas City, Mo., on March 6, 2020. Gilliam and his co-conspirators left Houston at about 5 p.m. on March 5, 2020, and traveled to Kansas City in three vehicles. Between midnight and 4:30 a.m. on March 6, 2020, they stole a Ford F-250 pick-up truck that was parked on the street in Fairway, Kansas, to use in their ATM theft. They used their cell phones to search for a suitable ATM.

At approximately 5:30 a.m. on March 6, 2020, four conspirators (wearing clothing that completely covered their faces and bodies) used tools to break into the ATM. The truck then backed up to the ATM and two chains were attached to the ATM. The truck then accelerated away from the ATM and forcibly pulled apart the ATM's inner encasement. Conspirators removed canisters of cash from the ATM, got back into the truck, and drove away. While the conspirators in the truck broke into the ATM, others assisted by sitting in a nearby get-away vehicle and conducting counter-surveillance for police vehicles. Investigators later found the abandoned truck, with the tow chains still attached, near the Citadel Apartments.

Gilliam and his co-conspirators drove from Kansas City back to Houston. Law enforcement officers, who used a traffic camera to obtain the license plate number of the get-away vehicle, were able to track their return trip. Officers intercepted the vehicles on the outskirts of Houston and attempted to stop the vehicles. One of the vehicles pulled over immediately, but the other two vehicles fled from the officers and a high-speed chase ensued. One of the fleeing vehicles crashed and its occupants were arrested.

The occupants of the third vehicle, including Gilliam, eventually abandoned the vehicle and fled on foot. As he fled from the police, Gilliam picked up a red Spiderman backpack that had been dropped by one of his co-conspirators. Gilliam was still in possession of the backpack, which contained \$72,385 stolen from the bank ATM, when he was arrested.

On June 2, 2021, Gilliam traveled from Houston to the Detroit, Mich., area. On June 3, 2021, Gilliam and his co-conspirators worked together to forcibly break into an ATM located outside the Chase Bank branch in Allen Park, Mich. Gilliam and his co-conspirators used a stolen Ford F250 pick-up truck, hooks, chains, and crowbars to break into the ATM and steal approximately \$80,240.

Gilliam and his co-conspirators transported the stolen money to a rental house located about eight miles away, in Detroit. Later the same day, law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at that residence, where Gilliam and four co-conspirators were found. Officers found \$71,238 in stolen money concealed in various places throughout the house. They also found the tools and clothing used to break into the ATM.

Two of Gilliam's co-defendants have pleaded guilty and been sentenced, and two co-defendants have pleaded guilty and await sentencing.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Brent Venneman and Leigh Farmakidis. It was investigated by the FBI, the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department, the Houston, Texas, Police Department, the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Montgomery County, Texas, Sheriff's Department, the Montgomery County, Texas, Constable, the Detroit, Mich., Police Department and the Allen Park, Mich., Police Department.

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Wendy writes for the United States Press Agency and is a former columnist with the Fulton County Expositor, Wauseon, Ohio.

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