

United States Department of Justice

**For Immediate Release**

April 28, 2010 **United States Attorney's Office**  
**District of Connecticut**

## **Pennsylvania Man Charged with Cashing Counterfeit Checks**

Nora R. Dannehy, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that a federal grand jury in New Haven has returned an Indictment charging DAVID DUPEE, also known as "Joshua Smellie," "Luther Johnson," and "Tahari Watkins," 41, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with nine counts of bank fraud stemming from an alleged counterfeit check cashing scheme.

The Indictment alleges that, between approximately June 2004 to June 2007, DUPEE cashed counterfeit checks at banks throughout central Connecticut. The counterfeit checks, which ranged in amounts between \$550 and \$1000, appeared to be payroll checks from various Connecticut businesses and municipalities. The checks had the actual bank account numbers of the entities that purportedly issued the check, and DUPEE cashed the checks at the banks that held the accounts upon which the checks were purportedly drawn. The counterfeit checks were made out in the names of aliases for which DUPEE had obtained false Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles identification, and DUPEE used that false identification at the banks in order to complete the fraudulent transactions.

Through this scheme, it is alleged that DUPEE defrauded banks of more than \$70,000.

If convicted, DUPEE faces a maximum term of imprisonment of 30 years and a fine of up to \$1,000,000, on each count.

DUPEE has been detained since February 11, 2010.

U.S. Attorney Dannehy stressed that an indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is entitled to a fair trial at which it is the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

This matter is being investigated by the United States Secret Service and the United States Postal Inspection Service. The Federal Bureau of Investigation also assisted in the investigation. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys David T. Huang and Anastasia Enos