



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FORMER CRISPERS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AGREES TO PLEAD GUILTY TO EMBEZZLEMENT CHARGES

Tampa, Florida - United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announced today the filing of a three-count felony information charging David C. Haas, a 45-year-old resident of East Hanover, New Jersey, with the unlawful interstate transportation of stolen property. The maximum penalty for each count in the information is ten years' imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000, plus forfeiture of the proceeds.

The information alleges that in 2007, defendant Haas was the interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Crispers LLC in Lakeland, Florida, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Publix Supermarkets. Crispers operates restaurants in Florida and elsewhere. The information charges that defendant Haas, in his capacity as the interim CEO, stole embezzled, or converted to his own use and benefit, approximately \$403,750.00 of funds belonging to Crispers, and thereafter transported or caused to be transported the funds to New Jersey.

Also filed along with the information was a plea agreement signed by the defendant. In the plea agreement, defendant Haas stipulated and agreed that he stole, embezzled or converted the Crispers funds, and thereafter transported the funds to New Jersey where they were used for his personal benefit.

The criminal investigation was conducted jointly by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the investigators received the full cooperation of Crispers and Publix officials. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Terry A. Zitek.

Defendant Haas will make his initial appearance and enter his guilty plea in Tampa Federal Court at a date to be determined.

An information is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until proven guilty.