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Southfield man facing eight felony counts for gambling violations

DETROIT, Sept. 17, 2024 — The Michigan Gaming Control Board (MGCB) announced today that a Southfield man is facing eight felony charges related to gambling violations in the state. The charges stem from an extensive joint investigation conducted by the MGCB in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Attorney General, after Caesars Entertainment notified the MGCB about an account holder who was allegedly engaging in fraudulent activities with his mobile betting account.

In April 2023, Jeffrey Saco, 38, allegedly made more than \$2 million in fictitious deposits into his Caesars sportsbook account by exploiting a system vulnerability. He placed nearly 10,000 bets within 16 days, wagering more than \$88 million. He then transferred more than \$521,000 into his personal account before ceasing activity on the platform.

“The Michigan Gaming Control Board takes the enforcement of gambling laws and regulations very seriously in this state,” **MGCB Executive Director Henry Williams** said. “To that end, I appreciate the collaborative partnership the agency has with the Michigan Attorney General’s Office and industry personnel at Caesars Entertainment—who initially notified us about this situation. It is important to remember that this individual who is facing charges has the right to due process and is presumed innocent until proven guilty. With that being said, we will now let the judicial system determine the truth in this matter and the veracity of the charges.”

An eight-count felony arrest warrant was issued for Saco based on the following charges:

- **Larceny by Conversion: 1 count.** Per the [Michigan Penal Code Section 362 \(MCL 750.362\)](#), larceny by conversion occurs when an individual embezzles or unlawfully converts money, goods, or other property that has been entrusted to them. The penalties for this offense depend on the value of the stolen property. For amounts exceeding \$20,000 or in cases involving prior larceny convictions, felony charges can lead to a prison sentence of up to 10 years, along with a fine of up to \$15,000 or three times the value of the stolen property—whichever is greater.
- **Gambling Activity-Felony Violation: 3 counts.** Under the [Michigan Gaming Control and Revenue Act, 432.218](#), each felony count is punishable by imprisonment for not more than 10 years or a fine of not more than \$100,000.00, or both, and the person shall be barred from receiving or maintaining a license for conducting a gambling operation where wagering is used or to be used without a license issued by the Board.
- **Using a Computer to Commit a Crime: 4 counts.** Under [MCL 752.796](#), each felony count for using a computer to commit a crime is punishable by a maximum term of imprisonment of 10-20 years and/or a \$10,000 fine.

“My office not only works alongside the Michigan Gaming Control Board to enforce our state laws prohibiting illegal gaming operations, we also partner to prosecute criminals taking advantage of

legitimate gaming venues,” said **Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel**. “I appreciate our partnership with the Michigan Gaming Control Board and share their dedication to enforcing our state’s gaming laws.”

Saco was arrested by Lathrup Village Police on Sept. 4. He was conveyed to the Grand Traverse Sheriff’s Department in Traverse City by agents from the Michigan Department of Attorney General’s Criminal Investigation Division. On Sept. 5, 2024, Saco was arraigned in the [86th District Court in Traverse City](#), and released on a \$500,000 personal bond. A scheduled probable cause conference took place at 2 PM on Friday, Sept. 13, and a preliminary examination hearing has been scheduled for Friday, Oct. 4, at 11 AM.

Michigan citizens can report alleged illegal gambling by contacting the MGCB at 1-888-314-2682 or sending a message to MIGamblingTip@michigan.gov.

*Gambling in any form is for entertainment purposes only. If you or someone you know may have a gambling problem, contact the National Problem Gambling Helpline at **1-800-GAMBLER**, text 800GAM, or visit www.1800gamblerchat.org. Help is available 24/7 and is free and confidential. Michigan citizens can also visit the [Responsible Gaming page of the MGCB website](#) for information on self-exclusion programs including the Disassociated Persons List and the Internet Gaming and Sports Betting Responsible Gaming Database, and DontRegretTheBet.org for additional tools to game responsibly.*

The Michigan Gaming Control Board shall ensure the conduct of fair and honest gaming to protect the interests of the citizens of the state of Michigan. Learn more at Michigan.gov/MGCB.