

WHITE HOUSE

Biden's clemency and pardon list includes former elected official, lawyers and medical bill company owner

The president commuted more than 1,500 sentences, setting a record for the most executed by a president in a single day.



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By Katherine Doyle

WASHINGTON – A county commissioner who was convicted of taking nearly half a million dollars’ worth of bribes, including a stone-fired pizza oven; a tax attorney wrapped up in the “biggest tax fraud prosecution ever”; and the owner of a Detroit-area Medicare billing company who orchestrated a \$26 million Medicare fraud.



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All had their federal sentences commuted by President Joe Biden on Thursday in the largest single-day act of clemency in modern history.

Biden commuted close to 1,500 sentences and pardoned 39 people in a sweeping and historic act for people who had been convicted of nonviolent crimes – many related to illegal drugs – and released from prison

more than a year ago under a pandemic-era law, the CARES Act, to limit crowding in federal prisons.

Many of those who received pardons had long ago completed their sentences, but the crimes will now be wiped from their records.

Biden said in a statement that Sherranda Janell Harris, a Connecticut woman who was convicted on federal drug charges at 24, had been pardoned. Now 43, she has worked in the finance and real estate sectors, is committed to her faith and church, and has been described as a role model for young women in her community.

Here are some of the people Biden granted clemency to and what they were charged with:

In Ohio, a former Cuyahoga County commissioner, Jimmy Dimora, served more than a decade in prison on corruption charges before Biden commuted his sentence Thursday. [Prosecutors said](#) Dimora orchestrated a sweeping pay-to-play scheme alongside a longtime political ally, former Cuyahoga County Auditor Frank Russo, to collect about \$450,000 in bribes that included gambling trips to Las Vegas and Canada, prostitutes and even a [stone-fired pizza oven](#).

At the time, it was described as one of the most sweeping corruption cases in Ohio's history. Dimora was released to home confinement in June 2023 after having served nearly 12 years. His sentence was reduced after a partial appellate court win in 2022.

Anthony Le, of Alabama, was 21 when he was sentenced to 10 years for drug and gun charges in 2020 after he pleaded guilty to one count for possession of marijuana with intent to distribute and two counts of using, carrying or possessing a firearm during or in relation to a drug trafficking felony, [according to prosecutors](#).

Malcolm Hartzog's life sentence had already been commuted to 30 years in prison by President Barack Obama in 2016, in what at the time was a record-setting use of clemency power. Hartzog had been charged more than a decade earlier on counts of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance.

A former law partner from Illinois, Paul Daugerdas, was convicted of overseeing fraudulent tax shelters – at a cost to the government of more than \$1.63 billion. The scheme [generated over \\$7 billion](#) of fraudulent deductions, according to prosecutors. His law firm agreed to pay a \$76 million penalty. Prosecutors called Daugerdas “the most prolific, pernicious and utterly unrepentant tax cheat in United States history,” while a judge described the case as “the biggest tax fraud prosecution ever,” [according to Forbes](#). He was sentenced to 15 years in prison in 2014; Biden commuted his sentence.

A medical billing company owner, Elaine Lovett, of Wayne County, Michigan, was convicted in 2017 for her role in a multimillion-dollar scheme to defraud Medicare [using false billing claims](#), in a [takedown that included](#) 20 Detroit-area doctors and health care workers, according to federal prosecutors. The \$26 million scheme involved billing Medicare for services that were never provided and efforts to bypass the government's probe. Lovett was sentenced to 10 years in prison and ordered by the federal District judge in the case to pay more than \$9 million in restitution.

Shaquan Hemingway was sentenced to 70 months in March 2022 as part of an interstate trafficking sweep to halt the distribution of drugs like heroin, fentanyl, crack cocaine and methamphetamines, as well as firearms. Thirty South Carolina drug traffickers, including one linked to the Jalisco New Generation Cartel of Jalisco, Mexico, were indicted in the multi-year sting, including Hemingway, who was 23 at the time, one of the youngest members of the group. 



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