

Birmingham man wins \$20K at casino, loses it in Windsor tunnel seizure - Detroit Free Press

Written by Administrator

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A lucky-day-at-the-casino turned into a bad-day-at-the border for one Birmingham man, whose nearly \$20,000 in gambling winnings were taken from him at the Detroit Windsor Tunnel.

That's because he lied about his gambling winnings and tried to sneak in too much money across the

U.S.-Canada border, according to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Federal authorities said that border agents late Monday night seized \$19,910 in gambling winnings from two Birmingham men, ages 29 and 30, who tried to avoid the \$10,000 currency reporting requirement. They did it by splitting the one man's casino winnings between them: one man reported having \$9,400, the other said he had \$9,500.

They were pulled over for more scrutiny.

To verify the amount, authorities said, the agents ordered them to a secondary exam area, where the truth eventually came out: The passenger admitted that he had lost at the casino, and that the money he was carrying was the driver's. The driver admitted that he had actually won \$40,000, deposited \$20,000 at the casino and then split the rest with his friend in order to be under the \$10,000 limit.

Had he just declared it, and filled out the currency reporting form, he would have gone home with his money, said Ronald G. Smith, chief CBP officer in Detroit.

Smith said the man can appeal the seizure through Customs and Border Protection.

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Port Director Roderic Blanchard noted that its not illegal to carry money in or out of the country. But, he stressed, It is required that you give an accurate declaration of the amount of money you are carrying.

The names of the driver and passenger were not released. Authorities said the crime was a civil offense, punishable by the seizure of the winnings.

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