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Union Officials, Contractor Indicted for Labor Bribery Scheme

State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn, Regional Inspector General John McGlynn of the United States Department of Labor, Richmond County District Attorney William Murphy and FBI Assistant Director In Charge of New York Field Operations Kevin Donovan today announced a series of indictments returned by a Brooklyn grand jury.

Two of the indictments charge four union business representatives--three from U.A. Plumbers Local 1 and the fourth from Steamfitters Local 638-- with bribe receiving by a labor official and larceny.

The job-sites included plumbing and sprinkler system work performed at the Staten Island University Hospital, where the union officials are charged with failing to enforce collective bargaining agreements in exchange for over \$60,000 in bribes.

A plumbing contractor was also indicted for allegedly paying bribes to union representatives, stealing almost \$1 million in fringe benefits, and falsifying his business records. The contractor and two others were also charged with filing false documents with the New York City Department of Buildings. The Grand Jury returned a separate indictment charging the contractor and others with various gambling-related crimes.

"This case is about safeguarding the rights of labor unions and their rank and file members," Spitzer said. "When those rights are violated by agents who hold vital positions of trust, it is imperative that law enforcement responds."

U.S. Department of Labor Inspector General Gordon Heddell said: "My office will continue to investigate and aggressively support the prosecution of corrupt union officials who sell out their union by putting their self-interest before that of their members. We will continue to make every effort to ensure that employee benefits and rights of union members are protected."

Commissioner Gill Hearn said: "Just a year ago, DOI arrested 19 plumbing inspectors on bribery charges and today's indictments reflect our continuing efforts, as well as those of our partners in law enforcement, to root out corruption in all phases of the plumbing industry - whether it be labor officials, contractors or expeditors. This investigation should provide the public with a sense of confidence that contractors will provide efficient, honest and responsible service."

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DA Murphy said: "The Richmond County District Attorney's office is proud to have participated in this investigation. It is imperative that law enforcement agencies work together to ensure that corrupt labor practices are exposed and prosecuted aggressively."

Mr. Donovan said, "Ridding labor unions and the construction industry of corrupt practices is a goal shared by all the members of the investigative team whose efforts produced the charges announced today. The FBI is proud to have contributed its expertise to this joint investigation. As the investigation continues, the FBI stands committed to pursue it in concert with our law enforcement partners wherever it may lead."

Dominick Goffredo, 45, of Staten Island, a Plumbers Local 1 business agent, is named in two of the indictments. He is charged with multiple counts of bribe receiving by a labor official, a class "D" felony, and multiple counts of larceny in the second degree, a class "C" felony.

Plumbers Local 1 business agents Thomas Parrella, 65, of Brooklyn, and David Aginsky, 56, of Monroe are also charged with bribe receiving by a labor official and larceny in the second degree, as is William Roche, 56, of Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey, a Steamfitters Local 638 business agent.

Christopher Chierchio, 35, of Staten Island, a plumbing contractor who operated "API Plumbing," is named in three indictments and is charged with grand larceny in the second degree, multiple counts of bribing a labor official, a class "D" felony, falsifying business records in the first degree, a class "E" felony, offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree, a class "E" felony, promoting gambling in the first degree, a class "E" felony, conspiracy in the fifth degree, and various felony and misdemeanor gambling charges.

Kenneth Goodman, 59, of Hauppauge, holder of a New York City master plumber's license used by Chierchio to operate API Plumbing, is charged with multiple counts of falsifying business records in the first degree, offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree, and conspiracy in the fifth degree. Alison LaBrusciano, 34, of Tarrytown, an expediter used by Chierchio is alleged to have filed false documents, and is charged with conspiracy in the fifth degree.

Chierchio, Ralph Castore, 46, of Staten Island, Wayne Castore, 45, of Staten Island, and Raymond Papaleo, 47, of Staten Island, are charged with promoting gambling in the first degree, a class "E" felony and conspiracy in the fifth degree. Wayne Castore, Anthony Castore, and Papaleo are also charged with possession of gambling records in the first degree, a class "E" felony.

The charges are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

Spitzer thanked the New York City Department of Investigation, the Inspector General of the United States Department of Labor, the New York City Police Department, the Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and District Attorneys William L. Murphy of Richmond County and Charles J. Hynes of Kings County for their assistance to the investigation. Spitzer commended former Assistant Depury Attorney General

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John Kantor for his contribution to the investigation, and noted the contribution of Dolan Garrett, the late First Assistant Deputy Attorney General of the Organized Crime Task Force ("OCTF"). Spitzer thanked the former and present Deputy Attorneys General In-Charge of OCTF, George Quinlan and J. Christopher Prather, Chief Investigator Mitchell Lampert, Deputy Chief Investigator Joseph Rauchet, and Supervising Special Investigator George Pagnotta, who supervised the investigation for OCTF, which included the use of wiretaps, search warrants and undercover investigators.

Assistant Deputy Attorneys General Amy Cohn and Dennis Walsh of the Organized Crime Task Force are handling the criminal cases for the Attorney General's office.

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