

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, July 26, 2019

**President Of Labor Union Arrested For Demanding And
Accepting Bribes**

**Defendant Glenn Blicht Demanded, and Accepted, At Least \$150,000 in Bribes
from an Employer in Exchange for Not Vigorously Representing Union
Members' Interests**

Geoffrey S. Berman, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Michael C. Mikulka, Special Agent-in-Charge, New York Region, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General ("DOL-OIG"), Darren Cohen, New York Regional Director, U.S. Department of Labor Employee Benefits Security Administration ("DOL-EBSA"), and William F. Sweeney Jr., the Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), announced that GLENN BLICHT, who currently serves as the president of a labor union (the "Union"), was arrested today for honest services fraud and a violation of the Taft-Hartley Act for demanding and accepting at least \$150,000 in bribe payments from an employer (the "Employer"). BLICHT will be presented today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Stewart D. Aaron.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney Geoffrey S. Berman said: "As alleged, Glenn Blicht abused his position as the president of a labor union to line his own pockets. He allegedly demanded and received bribes and, in return, he did not fight for his union members – the hard-working individuals whose interests he was duty-bound to protect. Together with our law enforcement partners, this Office is committed to rooting out corruption in union leadership."

DOL-OIG New York Region Special Agent-in-Charge Michael C. Mikulka said: "Labor racketeering investigations that involve bribing union officials are an important part of the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General's mission. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to vigorously investigate all types of labor racketeering allegations."

FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge William F. Sweeney Jr. said: "Criminals are asked to do things all the time for money, but sometimes they're asked not to do things for money. Glenn Blicht was supposed to be representing the best interests of hundreds of people who had faith in the fact that he was helping them, but he allegedly decided to help himself to bribes the other side was offering him. It's often hard to see what's actually going on just under the surface, but as the FBI, we have the ability to dig into criminal behavior and expose fraudsters for what they truly are."

According to the allegations contained in the Complaint against GLENN BLICHT^[1]:

From 2009 through the present, BLICHT served as an officer of the Union, including as its president for many years. In that role, BLICHT had a duty to act in the best interests of the Union and its members, including by avoiding personal financial conflicts of interest with the Union. Nevertheless, BLICHT demanded and received cash payments from the Employer, which employed a number of members of the Union. In exchange for these bribes, BLICHT declined to file arbitration claims on behalf of Union members. In total, BLICHT received at least approximately \$150,000 in bribes from the Employer over approximately 10 years.

In communications, a number of which were recorded, BLICHT repeatedly referred to the bribe payments as “tickets,” in which each ticket equaled a \$1,000 bribe. BLICHT instructed an official of the Employer (the “Official”) as to the number of “tickets” to pay BLICHT each time. Indeed, during the past year, the Official met with BLICHT several times and paid him bribes on approximately three occasions, at the direction of law enforcement. Each of these meetings was recorded.

* * *

BLICHT, 57, of Wilton, Connecticut, is charged with one count of honest services fraud, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison, and one count of demanding or receiving prohibited payments as a labor union official, which carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison. The statutory maximum sentences are prescribed by Congress and are provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the judge.

Mr. Berman praised the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation Division, DOL-OIG, IRS-CI, FBI, and DOL-EBSA for their outstanding work on the investigation. He added that the investigation is continuing.

This matter is being handled by the Office’s Complex Frauds and Cybercrime Unit. Assistant United States Attorneys Michael D. Neff and Andrew D. Beaty are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

[1] As the introductory phrase signifies, the entirety of the text of the Complaint and the description of the Complaint set forth below constitute only allegations, and every fact described should be treated as an allegation.