

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of Illinois

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, April 12, 2023

Former Labor Union President Admits Involvement in \$200,000 Embezzlement Scheme

BENTON, Ill. – The former president of the Alton chapter of the AFSCME labor union admitted involvement in the transportation of stolen money after he was caught embezzling more than \$200,000 from the organization.

Byron Clemons, Sr., 35, of Alton, pled guilty Tuesday in a U.S. District courtroom to one count of Interstate Transportation of Stolen Money.

“Labor unions exist to promote the interests of the working men and women who make up their ranks. But instead of promoting the interests of his members, Clemons used his position to enrich himself and get cash to gamble at casinos,” said First Assistant U.S. Attorney Jim Cutchin. “I commend the efforts of our partners at the U.S. Department of Labor for their diligent work in investigating this case and ensuring that Clemons is brought to justice.”

“Byron Clemons, Sr. personally enriched himself at the expense of dues-paying AFSCME members. Tuesday’s conviction affirms the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General’s commitment to ensuring that labor organization funds are only used for lawful purposes. We will continue working with our law enforcement partners to investigate union officials that violate the trust placed in them by the membership they are supposed to serve,” said Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge, Great Lakes Region, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

Clemons was the president of AFSCME’s Local 124 in Alton from June 2017 through January 2022. According to court documents, Clemons withdrew a total of \$202,100 from the Local 124’s U.S. Bank account from February 2021 to January 2022. The defendant used the funds to gamble at casinos and pay personal expenses.

The defendant’s sentencing is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on July 20, 2023, at the U.S. District Courthouse in Benton.

Agents with the U.S. Department of Labor – Office of the Inspector General and the Office of Labor – Management Standards contributed to the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Verseman is prosecuting the case.

Updated April 12, 2023