

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former Union Officials Plead Guilty To Embezzlement

CONTACT: Barbara Burns

PHONE: (716) 843-5817

FAX #: (716) 551-3051

BUFFALO, N.Y.—U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Betty Martin, 54, and Duane Rush, 44, both of Buffalo, NY, pleaded guilty to bank fraud before U.S. District Judge Elizabeth A. Wolford. The charge carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison and \$1,000,000 fine.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Maura K. O'Donnell, who is handling the case, stated that between 2006 and 2013, Martin served as the President, and Duane Martin served as the Vice President, of the Transportation Aides of Buffalo Union, also known as "TAB," a public employees union, comprised of school bus aides employed by the City of Buffalo.

While serving as union officers, Martin stole approximately \$61,746 of union funds, and Rush stole approximately \$59,683 in union funds from the union's M&T bank account. The two accomplished these thefts through the use of an M&T Bank debit card, drawn on the union's bank account, to pay for personal expenditures; by withdrawing cash from the account for personal use; and by writing checks from the union account to themselves. TAB's treasury was funded by dues paid by union members.

The plea is the culmination of an investigation by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Cheryl Garcia of the New York Regional Office.

Sentencing is scheduled for September 21, 2015 before Judge Wolford.