

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Eastern District of Michigan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Former Treasurer of the Detroit Fire Fighters Union
Sentenced to Prison for Stealing Over \$200,000 in Union
Funds**

DETROIT - Verdine Day, the former Treasurer of the Detroit Fire Fighters Union (DFFA), was sentenced to one year in federal prison for embezzling over \$200,000 in union funds, announced U.S. Attorney Dawn N. Ison today.

Joining Ison in the announcement were James A. Tarasca, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge, Chicago Region, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General.

Verdine Day, age 62, was sentenced to one year in prison, \$220,043.65 in restitution to the DFFA, and two years of supervised release by United States District Judge George Caram Steeh based on her conviction for bank fraud as charged in an information filed by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Day was hired by the Detroit Fire Department in 1986. She worked as a firefighter, engineer, and held other positions in the union before she was elected by her peers to Treasurer of the DFFA in November 2015. She was Treasurer from December 2015 until her retirement from the DFFA and the City of Detroit in September 2019.

During the four years Day was Treasurer of the DFFA, she fraudulently obtained approximately \$167,900.00 of union funds by (1) issuing checks in her name and then changing the name of the payee in the Union's Quickbooks software; (2) cashing checks which were voided by her in Quickbooks; (3) writing checks made payable to cash; and (4) withdrawing cash from DFFA bank accounts. Day also fraudulently obtained money by diverting funds intended by the DFFA to be a donation to the NAACP.

Day also used DFFA credit cards as her own personal credit cards while she was Treasurer and after she retired. In total, she charged approximately \$49,116.17 in personal expenses using DFFA credit cards. Her purchases on DFFA credit cards included flights, hotel rooms, cruises, car insurance premiums, satellite and cable TV service, national and state parks fees, and furniture. For example, Day used a DFFA union credit card to charge \$9,553 for a cruise with Royal Caribbean cruise lines in 2017. Day also used a union credit card to pay for another Royal Caribbean cruise costing \$8,975 on the Liberty of the Seas in 2019. She used the union's credit card to pay her bar bill at a casino in Ohio in May 2019 and for a meal at a Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. restaurant in Cozumel, Mexico in 2019.

U.S. Attorney Dawn Ison commended the work of the FBI and the Department of Labor in conducting this criminal investigation of a corrupt union officer and said, "Day's embezzlement was particularly egregious because she stole from the first responders in our community. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to root out corruption and fraud involving

unions and prosecute union officers who abuse their authority and line their own pockets at the expense of the union's membership.”

“As treasurer of the Detroit Fire Fighters Association, Verdine Day had a duty to safeguard the dues paid by men and women who put their lives on the line every day to protect our community,” said James A. Tarasca, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Detroit Field Office. “Today's sentencing makes it clear anyone who attempts to use their union position for personal financial gain will be held accountable by the FBI and our law enforcement partners.”

“Verdine Day embezzled more than \$200,000 in union funds in order to personally enrich herself at the expense of the dues-paying Detroit Fire Fighters Association members she was supposed to serve. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to pursue union-affiliated corruption investigations,” said Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge, Chicago Region, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sarah Resnick Cohen. The investigation of this case was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Labor.

Topic(s):
Public Corruption

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