

**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

Western District of Pennsylvania

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Business Manager Sentenced to 41 Months in Prison for Embezzling \$1.5 Million from Boilermakers Local 154**

PITTSBURGH - A former Boilermakers union official has been sentenced in federal court to 41 months in prison, followed by three years of supervised release, on his conviction of embezzlement and theft of Labor Union assets and income tax evasion, United States Attorney Scott W. Brady announced today.

United States District Judge Mark R. Hornak imposed the sentence on Raymond Ventrone, 60, of Hope Street, Pittsburgh, Pa., 15220. In addition to the prison sentence, Judge Hornak ordered Ventrone to pay \$2,391,183 in restitution to the Boilermakers Union, followed by restitution of \$500,000 to Zurich Surety and Financial Claims of Schaumburg, Illinois, and ordered him to pay \$223,881 to the Internal Revenue Service.

According to information presented to the court, Ventrone caused a loss to Local 154 of approximately \$3,000,000 over a four-and-one-half-year period between January 2010 and June 2015. When his thefts were discovered he was forced to resign his position as Business Manager of Local 154. That position was the most powerful job within the union. Ventrone used his unchecked power to authorize payments of retail goods that were of no use to the union. Some of these items were stored in his home, others were stored in storage units paid for by the Local, and others were on the Local's premises, but not accessible to members.

Judge Hornak said that, "By any measure, this is an extraordinarily serious offense...Officers have a significant fiduciary responsibility to the members they represent." The court also noted that Ventrone had engaged in "plainly unlawful and inappropriate conduct" by sending one of his subordinates to cash three Local 154 checks totaling \$105,000 from a gas station owner friendly with Ventrone. The cash was returned to Ventrone.

Listed below are totals of payments to various retail establishments made by Local 154 at Ventrone's direction:

- Approximately: \$970,000 at Best Buy;
- \$105,000 at the Apple Store;
- \$527,000 spent on Louis Vuitton purchases;
- \$198,602; \$38,000 spent on drums, percussion instruments and musical accessories, from Drum World that the defendant maintained under lock and key on the premises of Local 154, unavailable and off limits to Local 154 members;
- \$10,623.95 spent on Coco Lunette eye glasses for the defendant; \$26,000 spent on concrete work at the defendant's home; and
- \$9,000 spent on a kitchen remodel at the defendant's home.

The court noted that Ventrone had unnecessarily involved his son, a former NFL player, by renting him a spacious and extravagantly furnished apartment on the Local's property for a mere \$500 per month. The furnishings for the rental were from Restoration Hardware, LeVins, Macy's, Williams Sonoma, Best Buy and Pool City. The rental included a full and complete private fitness center with several large televisions that was not for the use or benefit of union members, but only for his son's use. Local 154 also paid the utilities. The rental wasn't vacated until this investigation became public. The loss to the union for the rent and furnishings was approximately \$39,000, and the loss for the private fitness center was approximately \$44,000.

Assistant United States Attorney Nelson P. Cohen prosecuted this case on behalf of the government.

U.S. Attorney Brady commended the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigations, the Department of Labor-OIG and the Office of Labor Management Standards for conducting the investigation leading to the prosecution of this defendant.