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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ILLINOIS STATE SENATOR INDICTED FOR ALLEGEDLY
FRAUDULENTLY RECEIVING SALARY AND BENEFITS FROM LABOR UNION**

CHICAGO — A federal grand jury in Chicago has indicted Illinois State Sen. THOMAS E. CULLERTON on embezzlement charges for allegedly fraudulently receiving salary and benefits from a labor union for which he did little or no work.

Cullerton, 49, of Villa Park, is charged with one count of conspiracy to embezzle from a labor union and employee benefit plans, 39 counts of embezzlement from a labor union, and one count of making false statements in a health care matter, according to an indictment returned Thursday in U.S. District Court in Chicago. Arraignment in federal court has not yet been scheduled.

The indictment was announced by John R. Lausch, Jr., United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Jeffrey S. Sallet, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago office of the FBI; and Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General in Chicago. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Amarjeet S. Bhachu and Abigail Peluso.

According to the indictment, Cullerton was a member of Teamsters Local Union 734 prior to assuming office as an Illinois State Senator. After his election in November 2012, Cullerton was no longer an eligible participant in Local 734's health and pension funds. In March 2013, while Cullerton was serving in the Illinois Senate, the president of Teamsters Joint Council 25 hired him as

a purported union organizer. The full-time, salaried position included benefits from Local 734's health and pension funds, due to an agreement Joint Council 25 entered into with Local 734 that same month, the indictment states.

The charges allege that for the next three years Cullerton did little or no work as an organizer. When Joint Council 25 supervisors requested that he perform his job duties, Cullerton routinely ignored them, the indictment states. From March 2013 to February 2016, Cullerton fraudulently obtained from Joint Council 25 and its members approximately \$188,320 in salary, bonuses, and cellphone and vehicle allowances, as well as approximately \$64,068 in health and pension contributions, according to the indictment. Cullerton used the proceeds of the payments to pay personal expenses, such as his mortgage, utilities and groceries, the charges allege.

The indictment alleges that Cullerton also fraudulently obtained approximately \$21,678 in reimbursed medical claims from Local 734's Health and Welfare Fund. Cullerton submitted or caused to be submitted to medical providers information that made it appear he was a "route salesman" for Local 734, the indictment states. The false information concealed and covered up the fact that Cullerton was not eligible for participation in the fund since he was not regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week for Local 734, Joint Council 25, or any other employer that participated in the fund, according to the indictment.

The public is reminded that an indictment is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. The charges in the indictment are each punishable by up to five years' imprisonment. If convicted, the Court must impose a reasonable sentence under federal statutes and the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines.

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