

PRESS RELEASE

Former Labor Union President Gets 18 Months in Federal Prison for Embezzling More Than \$200,000

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Illinois

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BENTON, Ill. – A U.S. District judge sentenced a former president of the Alton chapter of the AFSCME labor union to 18 months imprisonment after he admitted to embezzling more than \$200,000 from the organization and using the funds for personal expenses.

Byron Clemons, Sr., 36, of Alton, pleaded guilty to one count of Interstate Transportation of Stolen Money. In addition to the prison sentence, he will serve two years of supervised release and was ordered to pay \$202,100 in restitution.

In rejecting the defendant's request for probation, the sentencing judge stated that she hopes a message is sent that individuals who steal from non-profits will be held accountable.

"Clemons abused his position as the labor union's president to embezzle funds, enrich himself and get cash to gamble at casinos," said First Assistant U.S. Attorney Jim Cutchin. "I commend our partners at the U.S. Department of Labor for their diligent work in investigating this case and ensuring that Clemons be brought to justice."

"Former AFSCME Local 124 President Byron Clemons embezzled more than \$200,000 from the dues-paying members he had a duty to serve. This sentencing is an affirmation of our efforts with the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Labor-Management Standards to protect the integrity of labor organizations," 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.

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 prosecuted the case.

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