

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Columbia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, March 10, 2023

Former Union Officer Sentenced to Incarceration for Embezzling More Than \$500,000

Defendant and Co-Conspirator Used Money for Personal Purchases

WASHINGTON – Attia Little, 43, of Temple Hills, Maryland, was sentenced today to 24 months in prison after pleading guilty to conspiring to steal more than \$500,000 from the labor organization, using the money for parties, trips, furniture, and other personal expenses. U.S. District Court Judge Amit P. Mehta also ordered \$399,450 in restitution and 24 months of supervised release to follow the prison term.

The sentence was announced by United States Attorney Matthew M. Graves, Acting Special Agent in Charge Troy W. Springer, of the Washington Regional Office of the U.S. Department of Labor - Office of the Inspector General, and District Director Mark Wheeler, of the Washington District Office of the Office of Labor-Management Standards.

Little, a former union officer, pleaded guilty in July 2022 to one count of conspiracy and one count of theft from a labor organization. Little was the operations manager of the Property Services Division of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), headquartered in Washington, D.C. As part of her duties, she managed administrative support, booked reservations for SEIU employees, and paid vendor invoices for union-related purchases. She had a work-issued credit card and access to third-party discount travel booking platforms that were to be used for union business only.

A co-defendant, Melba Norris, was a close associate of Little's, and had no affiliation with the union. According to plea documents, between November 2015 and October 2017, Little used her access to the credit card and travel booking platforms to embezzle approximately \$503,600 from SEIU. In total, she kept approximately \$460,900 in SEIU funds for herself, and Norris kept approximately \$42,700.

Among other things, Little used the SEIU credit card to purchase personal items, including purchases for a baby, personal parties hosted at her residence, personal travel, furniture, watches, clothing, and video games. She also used the credit card to purchase gift cards for personal use. Little also used the credit card to pay funds to a company that she created and companies created and controlled by Norris, even though no work was performed.

Norris, 36, of Powder Springs, Georgia, pleaded guilty in May 2022 to charges of conspiracy and theft from a labor organization. On Oct. 5, 2022, Norris was sentenced to 6 months of incarceration, followed by 24 months of supervised release, and ordered to pay \$37,007 in restitution.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Graves, Acting Special Agent in Charge Springer, and District Director Wheeler commended the work of those who investigated the case from the Labor Department's Office of the Inspector General and Office of Labor-Management Standards. They also expressed appreciation for the work of those who handled the case at the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Financial Analyst Bryan Snitselaar, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Gauri Gopal and Ahmed M. Baset, who investigated and prosecuted the matter.

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