



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TWO UNION OFFICIALS CHARGED WITH LABOR EXTORTION CONSPIRACY

WASHINGTON - Two Indiana men are charged with labor-related extortion offenses in a three-count Indictment unsealed today, announced Assistant Attorney General Brian A. Benczkowski for the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Thomas L. Kirsch II for the Northern District of Indiana, Special Agent in Charge James Vanderberg of the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General's Chicago Regional Office and Special Agent in Charge Grant Mendenhall of the FBI's Indianapolis Field Office.

Thomas R. Williamson, 67, of Schererville, Indiana and Jeffrey R. Veach, 55, of Portage, Indiana, were arrested earlier today and each charged in a three-count indictment filed in the Northern District of Indiana with one count of Hobbs Act Extortion Conspiracy and two counts of Attempted Hobbs Act Extortion. Williamson and Veach had their initial court appearances and arraignment earlier today before U.S. Magistrate Judge John E. Martin for the Northern District of Indiana and were released on \$20,000 unsecured bond.

According to the indictment, Williamson and Veach used threats of violence and actual violence against non-union ironworkers in the course of their extortion plot. The defendants allegedly sought to extort a labor contract from "John Doe #1," who owned a steelworking company, and a business contract from "John Doe #2," who owned a construction company.

An indictment is merely an allegation, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

The case is being investigated by the Department of Labor Office of Inspector General and the FBI with the assistance of the Dyer Indiana Police Department. Trial Attorneys Conor Mulroe and Robert Tully of the Criminal Division's Organized Crime and Gang Section are prosecuting the case with the assistance of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Indiana.

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