

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Eastern District of Michigan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former UAW Official Pleads Guilty to Accepting Illegal Payments from Fiat Chrysler Automobiles

Another former UAW official entered a guilty plea to accepting illegal payments from Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), announced United States Attorney Matthew Schneider.

Joining in the announcement was James Vanderberg, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Department of Labor – Office of Inspector General, Timothy R. Slater, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit, Michigan office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Ian Berg, District Director, U.S. Department of Labor – Office of Labor-Management Standards, and Manny Muriel, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit, Michigan office of the Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigations.

Keith Mickens, 64, of Clarkston, Michigan pleaded guilty before the Honorable Paul D. Borman in United States District Court in Detroit, Michigan. The plea marked the fifth conviction in the ongoing federal investigation into corruption at the UAW and FCA.

Keith Mickens admitted to helping transfer hundreds of thousands of dollars from FCA to former UAW Vice President General Holiefield using two companies that Holiefield controlled with his girlfriend and later wife, Monica Morgan. FCA executives concealed the illegal payments using the bank account of the UAW-Chrysler National Training Center. According to court documents, Morgan and Holiefield used the payments for expenses such as installing a swimming pool at their residence in Harrison Township, Michigan. In January 2018, Monica Morgan was convicted of criminal tax fraud. Morgan is awaiting sentencing.

Separate from the illegal activities involving UAW Vice President Holiefield, Keith Mickens admitted that he and other senior UAW officials also accepted thousands of dollars worth of clothing, electronics, golf equipment, and other personal items that were paid for by FCA.

Between 2010 and 2014, Keith Mickens was one of the senior UAW officials responsible for administering the collective bargaining agreements on behalf of tens of thousands of UAW members employed by FCA. Mickens served as a member of the UAW's National Negotiating Committee in 2011 and was one of the UAW officials responsible for negotiating the collective bargaining agreements between the UAW and FCA.

"Today's conviction is the latest in a string of senior UAW officials who took secret and prohibited payments from the company they were supposed to be negotiating against," said U.S. Attorney Matthew Schneider. "The hard working rank and file members of the UAW deserve better from those who represent their interests."

"Today's guilty plea demonstrates a continued importance for the UAW's leadership to provide active assistance in the ongoing investigation to root out anyone who has participated in this "pay to play" scheme", said Timothy R. Slater, Special Agent in Charge, Detroit Division of the FBI.

“Mickens is another former UAW employee who abused his position by conspiring with UAW officers and employees to accept illegal payments and other things of value from FCA while he was responsible for collective bargaining on behalf of UAW members. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners and the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Labor-Management Standards to safeguard the assets of union members,” said James Vanderberg, Special Agent-in-Charge, Chicago Region, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General.

A sentencing date will be set by the court.

U.S. Attorney Schneider commended the outstanding work of the U.S. Department of Labor, the Internal Revenue Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in conducting a comprehensive criminal investigation into labor corruption and tax fraud activities involving a vital sector of the local and national economy.