

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Northern District of West Virginia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, October 6, 2015

**Two former labor union officials charged with
embezzlement**

WHEELING, WEST VIRGINIA – A federal grand jury returned indictments today charging two former labor union officials with embezzlement, United States Attorney William J. Ihlenfeld, II, announced.

Former President of the United Steelworkers Local Union 05-887, James Coffey, Jr., 54, of Bergholz, Ohio, allegedly utilized a business debit card to pay for personal expenses and wrote unauthorized checks to himself from a business bank account. He is charged with two counts of “Embezzlement from a Labor Union.” He faces up to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$10,000 on each of the two counts. The United States Department of Labor Office of Labor Management Standards is investigating.

Former Business Manager of the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local Union 83, Jeffrey Beresford, 55, of Cameron, West Virginia, allegedly used his position as a trustee of the Wheeling Joint Apprenticeship program to write unauthorized checks to himself from the program's bank account. He is charged with two counts of “Embezzlement from an Employee Benefit Plan.” He faces up to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000 on each of the two counts. The United States Department of Labor Office of Inspector General is investigating.

Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, the actual sentence imposed will be based upon the seriousness of the offenses and the prior criminal history, if any, of the defendants.

Assistant U.S. Attorney David Perri is prosecuting the cases on behalf of the government.

An indictment is merely an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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