



Department of Justice

Jennifer S. Burnside
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Office of Public Affairs, National Press Office
Phone: 202-324-8786
Fax: 202-324-6841
Email: Jennifer.burnside@ic.fbi.gov

Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of Texas
Tim Johnson - Acting United States Attorney

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WWW.USDOJ.GOV/USAO/TXS (713) 567-9388

CITY OF HEMPSTEAD OFFICIALS INDICTED FOR BRIBERY

(HOUSTON) – A sealed indictment charging City of Hempstead Mayor Pro-Tem Larry Wilson and City Alderman Paris J. Kincade, Jr. with violations of federal law arising from a bribery scheme has been unsealed following the arrest of both men, acting United States Attorney Tim Johnson and FBI Special Agent in Charge Andrew R. Bland, III announced today.

Wilson, 42, and Kincade, 53, both of Hempstead, are accused of soliciting, demanding and accepting bribe money or kickbacks from a local contractor in exchange for obtaining approved vendor status resulting in the awarding of city contracts. Both men were arrested by FBI agents this morning without incident. Wilson and Kincade are expected to make their initial appearances before a U.S. Magistrate Judge later today at which time the issue of bond is expected to be raised.

The five-count indictment returned under seal on Nov. 13, 2008, was unsealed today following the arrest of Wilson and Kincade. According to allegations in the indictment, Wilson who is the Mayor Pro-Tem and a City Alderman of the City of Hempstead and Kincade, City Alderman, conspired with one another beginning in December 2006 to use their official positions with the City of Hempstead to commit federal programs fraud. They corruptly solicited, demanded, accepted and agreed to accept monies from a contractor, intending to be influenced and rewarded in connection with the eventual award of city contracts. The City of Hempstead is located approximately 50 miles west of Houston in Waller County.

"Whenever public officials violate their oath of office and their public trust, the United States will take swift action to see that they are brought to justice," said acting U. S. Attorney Johnson.

"Our democracy depends on a healthy, efficient and ethical government, and corruption erodes the values upon which it is founded," said Houston FBI Special Agent in Charge Andrew Bland. "The FBI will continue to investigate allegations of corruption and anyone with information regarding public corruption is encouraged to report it."

Wilson and Kincade are also each charged with two counts of individually violating federal programs fraud.

A conviction for conspiring to violate federal programs fraud carries a penalty of imprisonment of not more than five years and/or a fine not to exceed \$250,000. A conviction for violating any one of the several substantive counts of federal programs fraud carries a penalty of imprisonment of not more than 10 years and/or a fine not to exceed \$250,000.

The charges are the result of an investigation conducted by special agents of the FBI. Assistant United States Attorney Michael Wright is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence. A defendant is presumed innocent unless convicted through due process of law.

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