



U.S. Department of Justice

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Eastern District of Michigan

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For Immediate Release:  
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Event: Indictment

Defendant: Samuel L. Riddle, Jr.

**GRAND JURY INDICTS SAMUEL L. RIDDLE, JR. FOR CONSPIRACY,  
EXTORTION, BRIBERY, AND MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS TO FBI**

***Charges Arise from Deals with Former Detroit City***

***Council Member Monica Conyers***

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A federal Indictment charging **Samuel L. Riddle, Jr.**, of Detroit, Michigan, with conspiring with former Detroit City Council President Pro Tempore Monica Conyers to use her positions on the City Council and the Board of Trustees of the City's General Retirement System and Riddle's position as Conyers' Chief of Staff to extort money from individuals having business before the Council and the pension board was issued by a federal Grand Jury, United States Attorney Terrence Berg announced today. Berg announced that Riddle also is charged with aiding and abetting Conyers in receiving bribes relating to the Synagro sludge hauling contract with the City of Detroit. In addition, Riddle is charged with making false statements to agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI") and for engaging in honest services mail fraud. The charges were set forth in a Third Superseding Indictment issued by a Detroit federal Grand Jury today.

According to the seven-count Third Superseding Indictment, between March 2006 and December 2007, defendant Riddle conspired with Monica Conyers and other individuals to interfere with commerce through extortion. Riddle and Conyers used Conyers' position on the Detroit City Council and on the Board of Trustees for the General Retirement System to force businessmen and consultants to pay money to Riddle and Conyers. In this regard, the Indictment alleges that Riddle and Conyers extorted \$20,000 from the owner of a technology company seeking a multi-million dollar investment from the General Retirement System. Riddle and Conyers worked together to extort \$20,000 from a Detroit restaurant owner who had business before the City Council and \$25,000 from a company operating strip clubs seeking a change in licenses from the City Council. In addition, Riddle and Conyers conspired to extort money from a Detroit real estate developer who had business before the City Council and who had sought a multi-million dollar investment by the General Retirement System. Finally, Riddle conspired to extort money in connection with the City sludge contract with Synagro Technologies, Inc. that was before the City Council. In this regard, Riddle also is charged with aiding and abetting Conyers in bribery, whereby Riddle accepted cash payments for Conyers influencing Conyers' vote on the Synagro contract. Riddle is charged with engaging in mail fraud and the theft of the honest services of Conyers by failing to disclose the conflicts of interest caused by Riddle and Conyers taking \$20,000 from the owner of the technology company who was seeking millions of dollars from the General Retirement System. Finally, Riddle is charged with making false statements to Special Agents of the FBI in connection with a cash payment made by Rayford Jackson through Riddle to Conyers, wherein Riddle acted as a bagman and conduit for cash meant to influence Conyers' vote on the Synagro contract.

If convicted, Riddle faces a maximum of twenty years in prison on each of the five counts of extortion, conspiracy to commit extortion, attempted extortion, and mail fraud in the Indictment. Riddle faces a maximum of ten years in prison on the bribery count and five years in prison for making false statements to the FBI.

The indictment also contains a criminal forfeiture allegation. The forfeiture allegation in the indictment provides the defendant with notice that the Government is seeking to forfeit

certain properties, or types of properties, upon the defendant's conviction.

If convicted of extortion charges, Riddle will be ordered forfeit \$50,000 in cash. The \$50,000 represents the amount of unlawful payments received by Riddle in connection with his extortion. Asset forfeiture is not a substantive offense, or an element of a crime, but is a required part of the punishment imposed upon conviction for certain criminal offenses.

Every person is presumed innocent until proven guilty. An indictment is only an allegation that must be proven in court. The jury will determine whether the evidence is sufficient to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Berg was joined in the announcement by FBI Special Agent in Charge Andrew Arena.

United States Attorney Berg said, "Today's charges ought to make clear that the concept of requiring business owners to pay City officials in order get something done, get a benefit, or avoid being harmed is nothing but corruption and graft, and it will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. The Indictment charges that Samuel L. Riddle and former Council member Monica A. Conyers engaged in a persistent and continuing pattern of extortion and bribery, using their positions in the government of the City of Detroit to personally enrich themselves at the expense of the citizens of Detroit."

Andrew Arena, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation said, "The City of Detroit has a right to expect honest services from its public officials, however, that trust has been abused. The indictment speaks for itself by outlining an arrangement of extortion and bribery between Sam Riddle and Monica Conyers. Public corruption is a top criminal priority of the FBI. This investigation demonstrates the FBI's commitment in investigating public corruption and bring those who betray the public's trust to justice."

The case was investigated by agents of the FBI. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Robert Cares, David A. Gardey and Rita Foley.