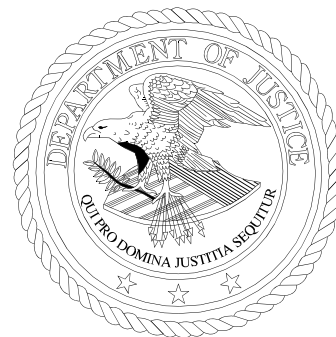


NEWS

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Paul J. Fishman, U.S. Attorney

More Information? Call the Assistant U.S. Attorney or other contact listed below to see if more information is available.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 26, 2010

Former Ocean County Political Party Official Sentenced to Probation and House Arrest for Promoting and Facilitating Bribery

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TRENTON - Alfonso L. Santoro, a former Ocean County Democratic Party official, was sentenced today to three years probation, including one year of home confinement and a \$10,000 fine, for causing the use of interstate facilities to assist in helping a Cooperating Witness ("CW") attempt to bribe local officials, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

U.S. District Judge Joel A. Pisano ordered Santoro, 70, to forfeit \$6,500, the amount of the payments that he personally received during the scheme, to the government.

Santoro pleaded guilty before Judge Pisano on December 3, 2009 to a one-count criminal Information that charged him with using and causing the use of telephone facilities in interstate commerce to facilitate bribery. At his plea hearing, Santoro admitted that, on May 18, 2008, he accepted a \$5,000 corrupt payment from a CW in exchange for Santoro's assistance in facilitating introductions and corrupt payments to public officials in Ocean County willing to exercise their influence in favor of the CW's real estate development interests. Judge Pisano further ruled that a second payment of \$1,500 that Santoro had accepted also was part of the corrupt scheme. Today's sentencing results from a two-track undercover FBI investigation into public corruption and international money laundering which resulted in the charging of forty-four individuals via criminal Complaints on July 23. Santoro was not one of those originally charged on July 23.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Pisano consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which recommend sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offenses, the defendants' criminal histories, if any, and other factors, including acceptance of responsibility. The judge, however, has discretion and is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence. In exercising his discretion in sentencing Santoro, Judge Pisano took into account, among other factors, that Santoro had bladder cancer and diabetes.

Fishman credited Special Agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Michael B. Ward, and the IRS Criminal Investigation Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge William Offord, for the investigation involving Santoro. Fishman also thanked the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office, under the direction of Prosecutor Luis A. Valentin, for their assistance in the investigation.

The case pertaining to Santoro is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Gramiccioni of the Office's Special Prosecutions Division.

-end-

Defense counsel: Angelo R. Bianchi, Esq. Bloomfield