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Southern District of New York*

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**FORMER CARPENTERS UNION LEADER SENTENCED
IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT TO 11 YEARS IN PRISON
FOR RACKETEERING AND LABOR CORRUPTION**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that MICHAEL FORDE, the former Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the District Council of New York City and Vicinity (the "District Council") of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (the "Carpenters Union") and Chairman of the District Council benefit funds, was sentenced today in Manhattan federal court to 11 years in prison for his participation in a racketeering scheme that defrauded the union and its benefit funds out of millions of dollars.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA said: "Today's sentence truly fits the crime. Michael Forde brazenly exploited his position at the helm of the Carpenter's Union and engaged in some of the most egregious behaviors associated with corrupt union bosses. Now, Forde's reign has come to an end, and his sentence should deter anyone foolish enough to follow in his footsteps."

According to the Indictment previously filed in Manhattan federal court and statements made at the plea and sentencing proceedings:

FORDE pled guilty to the racketeering charges on July 28, 2010, admitting that from 1994 through 2009, while he was an officer and, later, the head of the Carpenters Union in New York City, he engaged in a 15-year racketeering scheme in which he took bribes from multiple contractors, betrayed the union members he was supposed to protect, helped contractors cheat the District Council Benefit Funds out of millions of dollars, rigged job assignments, lied under oath, and obstructed investigations into his conduct.

The Carpenters Union is a national labor union that represents skilled workers at construction sites. In New York City, the approximately 20,000 members of the union are divided into eleven locals, overseen by the District Council. From 1994 to 1997, FORDE was a business agent for Local 608, the largest local in the District Council, with approximately 7,400 members. From 1997 to 2000, FORDE was the president and business manager of Local 608. From 2000 to 2009, FORDE was the Executive Secretary-Treasurer (the highest position) of the District Council and a trustee and eventual Chairman of the District Council's benefit funds.

FORDE received hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash bribes from certain contractors. In exchange for the bribes, FORDE and his co-conspirators allowed and helped the contractors to defraud the union and its benefit funds out of millions of dollars by permitting the contractors to, among other things, pay union members cash at below-union rates without benefits, employ illegal aliens and non-union workers on their job sites, and avoid payment to the union benefit funds in violation of applicable collective bargaining agreements. FORDE committed these crimes while the District Council was under court-ordered monitorship.

Judge MARRERO also sentenced FORDE to three years of supervised release. In addition to the prison sentence, Judge MARRERO ordered FORDE to pay a \$50,000 fine and \$100,000 as forfeiture. FORDE will also pay restitution to the union and its benefit funds. The amount of restitution to be paid is still under review and will be determined by the Court within the next 90 days.

During the sentencing proceeding, Judge MARRERO described FORDE's conduct as "a fall from grace of a man who once was a powerful public figure." He said the crime was "striking by its duration and depth of betrayal" and by "the multitude of people he injured." Judge MARRERO called the crime "downright wicked" and one that reached "the lowest circles of moral decay."

FORDE is one of ten defendants convicted in this case, and the second defendant to be sentenced. The nine other defendants are:

JOSEPH OLIVIERI, 56, a former trustee of the District Council Benefit Funds, was found guilty on October 18, 2010, following a jury trial. OLIVIERI is scheduled to be sentenced on January 21, 2011, at 3:30 p.m.

MICHAEL BRENNAN, 54, of Bushkill, Pennsylvania, who was a union shop steward, pled guilty on July 6, 2010, to the Indictment's RICO count, and specifically to racketeering acts involving the acceptance of cash bribes and obstruction of justice. He is scheduled to be sentenced on December 17, 2010, at 1:30 p.m.

BRIAN CARSON, 50, of Bronx, New York, who was a union shop steward, pled guilty on April 5, 2010, to one count of aiding and abetting the embezzlement of monies from union benefit funds. He was sentenced on August 13, 2010, to 19 months in prison.

JOHN GREANEY, 50, of Yonkers, New York, who was the former president and business manager of Local 608, pled guilty on July 16, 2010, to one count of racketeering conspiracy, one count of racketeering, four counts of wire-fraud conspiracy, four counts of deprivation of honest services, two counts of unlawful acceptance of payments by a labor representative, and one count of perjury. He is scheduled to be sentenced on December 17, 2010, at 3:30 p.m.

BRIAN HAYES, 39, a former business agent of Local 608, pled guilty on August 20, 2010, to one count of racketeering conspiracy, and one count of racketeering. HAYES is scheduled to be sentenced on January 14, 2010, at 3:00 p.m.

FINBAR O'NEILL, 44, of Paramus, New Jersey, who is a contractor, pled guilty on May 20, 2010, to one count of making unlawful payments to labor representatives, and one count of conspiracy to make such unlawful payments. He is scheduled to be sentenced on April 1, 2011, at 1:00 p.m.

JOSEPH RUOCCO, 50, of East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, who was a union shop steward, pled guilty on July 8, 2010, to one count of aiding and abetting the embezzlement of monies from union benefit funds. He is scheduled to be sentenced on December 17, 2010, at 2:00 p.m.

JOHN STAMBERGER, 53, of Brick, New Jersey, who was a union shop steward, pled guilty on March 12, 2010, to conspiracy to commit wire fraud, and unlawful acceptance of payments by a labor representative. He is scheduled to be sentenced on December 17, at 3:00 p.m.

MICHAEL VIVENZIO, 62, of Mahwah, New Jersey, who was a union shop steward, pled guilty on June 23, 2010, to one count of aiding and abetting the embezzlement of monies from union benefit

funds. He is scheduled to be sentenced on December 17, 2010, at 9:30 a.m.

All of these above-named defendants will be sentenced by Judge MARRERO.

Mr. BHARARA praised the DOL-OIG and the FBI for their outstanding work in investigating this case. Mr. BHARARA also thanked the Manhattan District Attorney's Office for their assistance in the case.

The prosecution is being handled by the Office's Organized Crime Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys LISA ZORNBERG and MARK LANPHER are in charge of the prosecution.

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