



More Fallout From UAW Corruption Scandal: Another Former President Indicted

September 1, 2020 | [Labor And Employment, Unions And Union Membership](#)



**David J.
Pryzbylski**
Partner

The United Autoworkers (UAW) union just can't escape its ongoing embezzlement and bribery scandal. Mere months after former president [Gary Jones pled guilty](#) to corruption charges, another former UAW president, Dennis Williams, was indicted on a count of conspiracy to embezzle union funds. The charge carries a maximum five-year prison term and a \$250,000 fine.

The charges against Williams allege that hundreds of thousands of dollars in union funds were used on various improper expenditures, including housing for his friends in Palm Springs, California; golf clothing and other related merchandise; rounds of golf outside; and certain meals, liquor, and cigars. Needless to say, those typically aren't the things workers expect their union dues to go towards.

Williams is accused of conspiring with at least six other senior UAW officials to embezzle union funds derived from employee-paid union dues. So far, 15 people have been charged in connection to the scandal, and eleven union officials have plead guilty to charges including racketeering, embezzlement, conspiracy, and tax fraud. Among the officials to plead guilty is former UAW president Gary Jones, who was accused of conspiring with UAW associates to embezzle more than \$1 million. It remains to be seen if Williams will fight the charges or plead guilty like Jones.

The indictment against Williams comes at a time when the Department of

RELATED PRACTICE AREAS

Labor and Employment
Labor Relations

RELATED TOPICS

United Auto Workers (UAW)
Union Corruption

Justice has proposed subjecting the UAW to [10 years of federal oversight](#) to eliminate corruption within the union, one of the longest periods of federal supervision in recent history. The agreement, however, would stop short of a full federal takeover of the UAW under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act, avoiding the type of government trusteeship which the Teamsters union underwent following its prosecution in the late 1980s. In addition to the federal oversight, U.S. Attorney Matthew Schneider has stated that he is in favor of implementing the direct election of union officials to the UAW's executive board, rather than the current set-up in which UAW executives are elected by delegates.

The investigation into the UAW and the charges against Williams are further steps forward in the Justice Department's effort to ensure that unions have honest and ethical leadership that is dedicated to serving its members, and not serving themselves. The ongoing investigation and charges seem to show no signs of slowing down, and likely won't be an asset to the UAW as it tries to regain ground among workers. It remains to be seen how big of an impact the appearance of union corruption will have on union membership.