

Transcript

September 19, 2011

Good afternoon everybody, Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley, with me on my right is First Assistant Attorney General Ed Bedrosian, to his left is our Criminal Bureau Chief Chris Walsh, and to my left is Detective Lieutenant of the State Police Unit assigned to the Attorney General's Office Robert Irwin.

Today we announce that a grand jury has returned several indictments in public corruption allegations as a result of our ongoing investigation of hiring practices in the Probation Department. These indictments against John "Jack" O'Brien, the former Commissioner of Probation, as well as against Scott Campbell, who was the former Chief of Staff to the former Treasurer Tim Cahill, include conspiracy charges that we allege are part of a completed plan to trade fundraising dollars for a taxpayer funded public job, as well as campaign violations and in one instance filing of a false statement, I'll expand on that in one minute. We also want to stress that this is an active and ongoing investigation into probation hirings and other matters in our Public Integrity Division. This is only the beginning of this investigation, not the end of it. We sought grand jury indictments on some of the charges as we approached a six year statute of limitations early this year in 2011. We sought to seal those indictments with the help of the court based on the ongoing investigation at the time and the need to preserve the integrity of the investigation. Additional indictments were returned today and today we sought with that return to unseal the other indictments and I'll address those as we go forward.

First, we have alleged with a series of different charges under state law that based on a quid pro quo fundraising for a taxpayer funded job position that Scott Campbell, who was former Chief of Staff for then Treasurer Cahill was approached in 2005 of the possibility of hiring Laurie O'Brien, the spouse of John O'Brien, for a job at the Lottery. We allege in these indictments that Campbell responded in these discussions that Treasurer Cahill was interested in a fundraiser and Campbell wondered whether the Commissioner would be involved in, or wanted to be involved in such a fundraiser. We believe that in June 2005, John "Jack" O'Brien hosted a fundraiser in which he raised approximately \$11,000 in funds that went to the campaign funds of then Treasurer Cahill and that Laurie O'Brien began a job in September as a customer service representative at the Lottery.

Secondly, as it relates to campaign finance allegations, Campbell also faces charges for separate violations relating to activity in 2010, at the time when he served as campaign manager of Cahill when he ran for Governor of Massachusetts. We allege that in this instance, on at least three separate occasions, Campbell approached friends and relatives, gave them \$500 in cash and requested that they then write checks in their own names to the Cahill for Governor Campaign, to his campaign. This is, we believe, a violation of the laws that require that there be full disclosure of where funds come from and what amounts, as you know \$500 is the limit per person per contribution in Massachusetts. And in doing so, we allege that Campbell disguised the source of this money, therefore

engaged in essentially contribution laundering to do an end run around the contribution limits that Massachusetts places in order to preserve the integrity of elections and particularly the campaign finance law. In addition and unrelated to these indictments we also returned from the grand jury today, unsealed today, an indictment that alleges against John O'Brien that in 2005, O'Brien certified to the Trial Court, Office of the Trial Court that still nominally oversaw hiring practices and hiring and promotions at the Probation Department, that an appropriate protocol and the practice that had been prescribed to be followed in the Office of the Trial Court had been for a particular promotion, however, we allege in this indictment that a decision about who was going to be promoted to that position had already been made based on an outside request for that promotion and the fact that the decision had made prior to the time any final hiring interview was done. That's a violation of Massachusetts law and I've tried to explain the allegations although they are in some ways unrelated they involve these two individuals that span a time frame between 2005 and 2010.

I want to stress again, today's indictments mark just the beginning not the end of the work of our Public Integrity Division, in looking at hiring at Probation and other political corruption matters. I must stress also that these are indictments only, that the Commonwealth always has the burden of proof to prove at trial or otherwise beyond a reasonable doubt, the truth of these charges and therefore these defendants are innocent until proven guilty. We have taken this investigation and these allegations that have become public and other for extremely seriously and will continue to follow this investigation where the facts and the laws lead us. We're asking that any individuals who may have information that they think can be helpful to this investigation should contact our State Police at the Attorney General's Office at 617-963-2105. Those indictments, again, for Jack O'Brien, are five, two are felonies, three are misdemeanors, and there are four indictments against Scott Campbell, one is a felony, and three are misdemeanors.

And I would be happy to take questions that I can answer.