

NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

FINANCIER THOMAS KONTOGIANNIS SENTENCED TO 97 MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT FOR LAUNDERING BRIBES FOR FORMER CONGRESSMAN RANDALL "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - May 16, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that today United States District Judge Larry A. Burns sentenced Thomas Kontogiannis to serve 97 months in custody, pay a \$1,050,000 fine, and serve three years of supervised release following his release from custody. Kontogiannis pled guilty in February 2007 to one count of Engaging in Monetary Transaction in Property Derived from Specified Unlawful Activities, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1957, for his involvement in laundering bribe money for then-Congressman Randall "Duke" Cunningham.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorneys Valerie H. Chu, Jason A. Forge and Phillip L.B. Halpern, who prosecuted the case, Kontogiannis operated a massive fraud and money-laundering enterprise, which he used

to help Cunningham by laundering hundreds of thousands in bribes from defense contractors, including Brent Wilkes.

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt stated, “Mr. Kontogiannis operated on the other side of the country, but today’s sentence confirms that no one is above the law or beyond its reach.” United States Attorney Hewitt commended the outstanding work of the agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service and the Defense Criminal Investigative Service, who investigated this case.

FBI Special Agent in Charge Keith Slotter commented, “The fabric of this great nation was weaved by good men and women committed to the idea that the people would be represented fairly. Public corruption tears at every thread of that fabric. The FBI is committed to aggressively pursuing those who bribe public officials for the purpose of seeing their personal interests fulfilled to the detriment of the common good.”

“Today’s sentencing marks the end to yet another chapter in the public corruption story book,” said Catherine D. Tucker, Acting Special Agent in Charge, IRS-Criminal Investigation, Los Angeles Field Office. “Those individuals who are brazen enough to buy our elected officials for their own personal financial gain will be brought to justice. IRS Criminal Investigators will continue to work in partnership with our fellow law enforcement officers and ensure the public’s confidence in our tax and political systems.”

“Public corruption is always unacceptable, but it is especially detestable when a U.S. Congressman is involved. While the vast majority of public officials are honest and committed to serving their fellow citizens, some choose to abuse the public trust. Corruption of this nature strikes at the heart of good government and erodes public confidence,” said Rick Gwin, Special Agent in Charge, Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS), Western Field Office.

The Court ordered Kontogiannis remanded immediately into custody to begin serving his sentence.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 07cr0423LAB

Thomas Kontogiannis

SUMMARY OF CHARGES:

Title 18, United States Code, Section 1957 - Engaging in Monetary Transaction in Property Derived from Specified Unlawful Activities

INVESTIGATING AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Division
Defense Criminal Investigative Service