

# **Judge Sentences Former Missouri State Representative for Using Campaign Funds for his Own Personal Use and Expenses**

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ST. LOUIS – United States District Judge Stephen R. Clark sentenced Courtney Curtis, today, to 21 months in prison and ordered him to pay restitution in the amount of

\$47,867.69 to the victims. The 39-year-old Ferguson, Missouri resident pleaded guilty to three counts of wire fraud relative to his theft of funds from his “Curtis for MO” campaign account. Curtis served as Representative of Missouri District 73 from 2013 until 2019. Most recently, Curtis served as an assistant to St. Louis County Councilwoman Rita Heard Days.

Beginning on or about January 1, 2016 and continuing through or about December 31, 2017, Curtis misled donors by falsely representing that money contributions to the “Curtis for MO” campaign committee would be used for campaign and reelection purposes, when, in fact, he used a substantial portion of the money contributed by donors to the “Curtis for MO” campaign committee for his own personal use and expenses.

After fraudulently convincing constituents to donate money to the “Curtis for MO” campaign committee, Curtis knowingly used monies in the “Curtis for MO” campaign committee bank account for his own personal benefit, unrelated to any legitimate campaign or re-election purpose in various ways, including but not limited to: using money in the account to pay for his apartment rental and utility bills; paying for hotel, airfare and travel expenses for himself and companions; paying for restaurant and bar bills; withdrawing funds from the account through substantial cash withdrawals, including at area casinos; and, using money in the account to purchase retail items for his personal use.

Additionally, from time to time, Curtis deposited campaign donation checks into his personal bank account and used those funds to pay for personal living expenses unrelated to any legitimate campaign or re-election purpose. Curtis acted to conceal his scheme by failing to file required reports with the Missouri Ethics Commission, or by filing false reports with the Missouri Ethics Commission, which failed to identify his cash withdrawals from the “Curtis for MO” campaign committee bank account, failed to identify payments made directly from the “Curtis for MO” campaign committee bank account which were made for his own personal use, unrelated to any campaign or re-election purpose, and failed to identify campaign donation checks received and deposited to his personal bank account. Curtis wire transferred funds from the “Curtis for MO” campaign account to pay for personal expenses and to make cash withdrawals.

Total funds obtained by Curtis through his scheme to defraud his donors was approximately \$47,867.69.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Hal Goldsmith is handling the case.