

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Sunday Edition: Six Actions That May Land You in Prison If You Are Elected Or Appointed To Public Office

Opinion / **Published On August 09, 2015 10:16 AM /**

Teri Helenese **August 09, 2015**



Emotional Intelligence teaches us not to rejoice when our enemy falls, not to gloat over people's legal problems, and not to let our hearts be glad when people stumble. If we are parents, these lessons in emotional intelligence must be brought into even greater focus so we don't wash our tongue on others, only to experience similar misfortune down the line in our own lives. This level of self-awareness and introspection is key for humanity.

U.S. Virgin Islanders need to wait for the trial and afford the three men charged on August 6, with various offenses based on their alleged participation in a bribery scheme

involving over \$17 million in construction contracts awarded by the Virgin Islands Public Finance Authority (VIPFA), the presumption of innocence that we would give to our family, friends and neighbors. These men are innocent until proven guilty.

With that said, the 14 year sentence in 2011 of former Illinois Governor, Rod Blagojevich for a wide-ranging corruption scheme; the 10 year sentence in 2012 of former New Orleans (NOLA) Mayor Ray Nagin, for corruption as NOLA tried to rebuild in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina; the two year sentence in 2015 of former Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell for taking money and gifts in exchange for marketing and endorsing a dietary supplement while he was in office, and the 17 year sentence of businessman Mark St. Pierre in NOLA for bribery, conspiracy, and wire fraud for paying \$880,000 in kickbacks to NOLA government officials under the steer of then-mayor, Ray Nagin, is lesson enough for elected and appointed government officials and businessmen alike to know that no person is immune from the long hand of government surveillance and the law.

For citizens who are interested in running for office and serving in the Legislative, Executive, or Judicial Branch, now more than ever it is important to know that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is uniquely situated to combat corruption and complex undercover operations that include but are not limited to the following:

Political Corruption: Elected and appointed government officials using their office, influence, and power for unlawful private gain and trading in influence.

Bribery: The offering, giving, gifting, funding, underwriting, contributing, receiving or soliciting of something of value for the purpose of influencing the recipients action or the discharge of an elected or appointed official's government responsibilities.

Embezzlement: The fraudulent appropriation of property by an elected or appointed government official entrusted to protect its possession.

Proof of Scheme and Artifice to Defraud: How many hours a day at work do you spend posting and commenting on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter? Have you called in sick when you weren't sick at all? Have you stolen company paper, pens, notebooks, and pencils for your personal use? Have you billed your client for eight hours of work, when you only worked five? Have you done personal work like writing a speech or fundraising for your fraternity or sorority on company time? Has your company reimbursed you for expenses you did not pay for? Have you used your company's corporate card to buy gas for your personal vehicle? Several of these examples rise to theft and several rise to a "Scheme or Artifice to Defraud." The companies we work for have an intangible right to our "honest services."

Mismanagement and Misuse of Government Funds: Living high off the hog, wasteful and reckless spending of government funds or misuse of government property or resources, which results in poor and subpar practices, controls, systems, structures and decisions. The Federal, State, and Local Government is not a personal piggy bank or slush fund. It is mandatory that public officials know and fully understand that if elected or appointed, their job is to serve the people and sacrifice. If one's goal is to increase one's personal savings account and net worth, attach to the private sector where free enterprise and capitalism flows. And understand that in the 21st century global economy, even

businesses have a larger purpose than the bottom line.

Conflict of Interest: Conflict between government interests and private interests that influence the discharge and performance of an elected or appointed government official's duties.

The FBI and its partners in the state and local government and private sector companies are doubling down. Government officials who work in purpose and not for numbers sleep sound every night.

References:

944 Proof of Scheme and Artifice To Defraud

Workplace Felonies: The Companies We Work for Have an Intangible Right To "Honest Services"

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