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## The Star-Ledger

### Assemblyman's kin charged in graft probe

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**BY STEVE CHAMBERS**

**Star-Ledger Staff**

The nephew of Assemblyman Thomas Giblin was charged yesterday in an alleged kickback scheme as federal prosecutors continued to investigate what sources have called a corruption probe into a union local and the politically active family that has run it for decades.

Dennis J. Giblin, 36, president of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 68 and administrator of its education fund, appeared before a federal magistrate in Newark hours after surrendering to agents.

Giblin is the son of Vincent J. Giblin, national president of the union and chairman of the board of directors of Horizon Blue Cross-Blue Shield of New Jersey. The father did not respond to a message left at his office in Washington.

Dennis Giblin had been previously named a co-conspirator by his title and initials in a criminal complaint filed against one of his friends and employees, Christopher Ruton. That complaint has been dismissed, said Anthony Moscato, an assistant U.S. attorney handling the case.

Citing a new criminal complaint, Moscato said Giblin allegedly had audiovisual equipment installed in his Jersey City condominium in 2005 at a reduced price by a vendor that had done work for the union fund. In exchange, he said, Giblin threw more work to the vendor and used fund money to pay labor costs for the work done at his condo.

The criminal complaint also alleges a \$1,300 couch purchased with money from the fund -- established to provide training to union members -- wound up in Giblin's condo.

Michael Drewniak, a spokesman for the U.S. attorney's office, said the investigation is continuing.

Giblin faces up to three years in prison on the kickback charge and up to five years on two charges of embezzlement from the fund. He could be fined \$250,000 on each count. Magistrate Mark Falk freed Giblin on \$25,000 bail.

"We were very disappointed they have chosen to bring these charges," said Giblin's attorney, Cathy Fleming of the New York firm Nixon Peabody. "We are confident he will be vindicated, and we look forward to it."

Thomas Giblin (D-Essex), who ran Local 68 for decades and is its business manager, said the fund and the union are wholly separate entities. Founded in 1958, the union local represents nearly 5,800 New Jersey building maintenance workers. The fund is headquartered across the street from the union in West Caldwell.

Thomas Giblin, a former chairman of the state Democratic Party, said he has never been asked to appear before a grand jury hearing testimony in the case.

"They asked in the normal course of their investigation for a lot of records," he said. "All requests were complied with. As far as I know, the issues being presented do not impact on Local 68."

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