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**FORMER BUS DRIVERS' UNION PRESIDENT SENTENCED
IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT TO 33 MONTHS IN PRISON
FOR EXTORTING OVER \$600,000 FROM BUS COMPANY OWNERS**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that WARREN JOSEPH ANNUNZIATA, the former President of Local 91 of the United Craft and Industrial Workers' Union ("Local 91"), was sentenced today to 33 months in prison by U.S. District Judge COLLEEN MCMAHON. ANNUNZIATA pled guilty on July 29, 2010, to extorting over \$600,000 from numerous bus company owners.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA stated: "As corrupt union bosses go, Warren Joseph Annunziata sounds like something out of central casting. He exploited his position to shake down bus companies that employed his rank and file members and used the money to drive a fancy car and live in the lap of luxury. Together with our partners at the FBI and the United States Department of Labor, we will continue to go after corrupt union leaders and put them behind bars."

According to the Indictment and other documents previously filed in Manhattan federal court:

Local 91 is a union that represents approximately 2,000 individuals, including bus drivers and bus escorts who work for companies that contract with the New York City Department of Education to provide students with transportation to public schools throughout New York City.

From approximately 1992 through 2009, ANNUNZIATA used his position as a high-ranking Local 91 official to solicit and collect cash payments totaling over \$600,000 from various bus company owners whose employees were members of Local 91.

Beginning in 1992 and continuing through late 2009, ANNUNZIATA demanded and received annual cash payments from the owners of at least three different bus companies whose employees were Local 91 members. ANNUNZIATA demanded the payments from each of the bus company owners, who agreed to pay because they understood and feared that, if they failed to do so, ANNUNZIATA

would use his position as head of the labor union to which the bus companies' employees belonged to harm their businesses.

First, from at least 1992 through 2006, ANNUNZIATA demanded and collected cash payments of approximately \$25,000 per year from the owners of one bus company ("Company-1"). Every year around the Christmas holiday, ANNUNZIATA demanded payment. Company-1's owner placed the cash in an envelope, and then left the cash-filled envelope in a medicine chest inside the bus company's bathroom. ANNUNZIATA arrived at the bus company, went into the bathroom, took the cash envelope, and left.

ANNUNZIATA also collected annual cash payments from a second bus company ("Company-2"). When new owners purchased Company-2 in 1993, ANNUNZIATA came to the bus yard and demanded that they pay him \$10,000 per year. In response to ANNUNZIATA's demand, the owners of Company-2 put together and made cash payments of approximately \$10,000 per year, every year from 1993 through 2009. The owners typically placed the cash in envelopes or gift bags, and then delivered the cash payments to ANNUNZIATA in restaurants or at other locations outside the bus company's offices. In total, ANNUNZIATA took approximately \$160,000 in cash payments from this bus company.

ANNUNZIATA further received cash and other benefits from a third company ("Company-3"), whose employees were Local 91 members. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the owners of Company-3 placed tens of thousands of dollars into a Citibank account. Using two separate false identities, ANNUNZIATA then wrote checks drawn on that account and forged signatures to pay for his personal credit cards, which were used to purchase clothing, furniture, and other personal items. ANNUNZIATA owned a home worth \$1.6 million and several luxury vehicles, including a Rolls-Royce.

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At today's sentencing, JUDGE MCMAHON stated that "unions are going through a hard time right now," and that "behavior that brings leaders of unions into disrepute must be condemned."

Mr. BHARARA praised the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Department of Labor in the investigation of this case.

This case is being handled by the Office's Organized Crime Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorney ELIE HONIG is in charge of the prosecution.