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 Subject: **Emailing: Prosecutors to oversee NYC construction union -- Newsday.com**
 Date: July 30, 2008 6:48:01 AM CDT
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July 30, 2008



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Prosecutors to oversee NYC construction union

By AMY WESTFELDT | Associated Press Writer
July 29, 2008

NEW YORK - A union local representing 1,500 crane and heavy-equipment operators has been put under federal prosecutors' control after more than two dozen members were convicted of mob-related corruption in recent years.

A consent decree between prosecutors and Local 14 of the International Union of Operating Engineers allows a federal judge to appoint two officers who can dismiss and appoint union officials, seize union assets and visit job sites to root out corruption.

The agreement resolves civil racketeering claims brought from past mob corruption cases, including an indictment that sent reputed acting Colombo family boss Joel Cacace to prison for 20 years.

"This consent decree will help protect the Local 14 membership from the pervasive influence of organized crime that has long plagued the union," U.S. Attorney Benton Campbell said.

A union attorney didn't return a telephone message Tuesday; the union local declined comment through a spokesman.

The consent decree, approved Monday by a Brooklyn federal judge, followed a civil lawsuit filed Friday by the Department of Justice against Local 14.

The civil racketeering claims followed two prosecutions targeting the Colombo and Genovese crime families, netting 26 convictions on labor racketeering charges of the local's members and representatives.

The indictments charged that the mob extorted union officials to create no-show jobs for mob associates, while union officials and members took kickbacks and bribes from contractors.

The decree allows a judge to appoint an ethical-practices attorney and hearing officer to oversee the union for five-year terms that could be extended. The ethical-practices attorney will be able to review union expenses and contracts, oversee elections and seize assets. The hearing officer will oversee disciplinary hearings called by the ethical-practices attorney and will be able to suspend, fine or fire union members.

The union local agreed to amend its bylaws to ensure its job referral process is corruption-free, requiring employers who want specific employees on the job to make the request in writing and pledging not to discriminate or favor certain workers.

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