

Alabama casino lobbyist outlines bribe offer - Bloomberg

Written by Administrator
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MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — A former gambling lobbyist now in federal prison outlined years of cash payments to one Alabama state legislator and a \$1 million bribe to another Monday during his first court appearance since pleading guilty in a government corruption investigation.

Former

Country Crossing lobbyist Jarrod Massey testified in a bond revocation hearing for Country Crossing developer Ronnie Gilley. A judge did not immediately rule whether Gilley could remain free.

Massey, wearing a yellow prison outfit, handcuffs and leg chains, said he paid \$1,000 to \$2,000 in cash monthly to former state Rep. Terry Spicer, D-Elba, for six or seven years in return for him helping Massey get lobbying clients, including Gilley, while Spicer was serving in the Legislature. Massey said he also gave Spicer \$9,000 to buy a boat.

Spicer, who has not been charged, did not immediately return phone calls seeking comment. He is currently the superintendent of schools in Elba.

Massey testified that at Gilley's direction, he offered \$1 million annually in public relations work to state Sen. Scott Beason, R-Gardendale, to get his support for pro-gambling legislation. Massey said he didn't realize Beason was working with federal investigators at the time.

The cooperation by Beason and others led to Massey, Gilley, and 10 others being charged with buying and selling votes on legislation that would protect electronic bingo casinos from raids. Massey and his former lobbying assistant, Jennifer Pouncey, have pleaded guilty and are cooperating with prosecutors.

Pouncey and Massey are expected to testify when Gilley and the other defendants go on trial April 4. Massey's statements Monday indicated Pouncey's testimony would be shocking.

"Ms. Pouncey had information about a number of offers made to members of the Legislature," he said.

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Prosecutors are seeking to revoke Gilley's bond because they say he tried to buy Massey's and Pouncey's silence by offering them a financial interest in the now-closed Country Crossing casino in Dothan and a proposed casino in Mississippi to keep his silence.

"It was an effort to keep me on the Gilley team," Massey testified.

Gilley's attorney, Doug Jones, said no offer was ever made and Massey was misinterpreting remarks made by Gilley. He said Gilley's comments to Massey were simply assurances that he would pay about \$90,000 in past-due lobbying bills.

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