



---

For Immediate Release  
Friday, December 10, 2004

Contact:  
Nathan Paul Mehrens, Esq.  
703.421.6509  
[npm@stopunionpoliticalabuse.org](mailto:npm@stopunionpoliticalabuse.org)

## **SUPA Applauds Labor Department's Increased Auditing and Enforcement Activities**

(WASHINGTON, DC)

The U.S. Department of Labor recently released a report on their compliance assistance and enforcement efforts for fiscal year 2004. During this time period the Department has greatly increased the number of compliance audits conducted to 518 which is nearly double the number completed during the previous year.

The Department has also secured numerous landmark criminal convictions against corrupt union leaders who used unions' finances as their personal "piggy banks." Most notable among the recent convictions were those relating to the scandal at the Washington Teachers' Union where more than \$4.5 million was embezzled to pay for such high end luxury items as a plasma T.V, mink coats and hats, Channel earrings, a double-barrel shotgun, a silver ice bucket with carved swan heads on either side, among many other items.

The corruption was so appalling that it prompted the federal judge who sentenced the union's president to proclaim her actions "heinous, fraudulent acts." A second federal judge in another aspect of the case stated, "It seems everyone in a responsible position fell asleep at the switch. The only ones who were vigilant were the thieves, who took everything that wasn't nailed down."

These crimes point toward the necessity of enforcement actions that the Department of Labor has recently stepped up. "For increasing the emphasis on enforcement I applaud the Department" said SUPA president, Linda Chavez who continued, "I hope that this emphasis will discourage other bad actors from plundering the dues of their hard working members."

SUPA is a non-profit organization working to protect workers' rights to decide how their dues are spent in the area of political expenditures. We work to insure that all union political activity is funded through voluntary sources.

—End—