

Embezzlement, perjury part of 22 new charges against ex-state senator

Written by By Joey Peters NM Political Report
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This week, a grand jury charged former state Sen. Phil Griego with 22 new criminal counts centering mostly on embezzlement and perjury for allegedly using campaign money for personal use and lying about it.

In total, Griego faces 19 new felonies and three misdemeanors. This adds to the nine previous corruption counts Griego was charged with last summer by a district court judge in Santa Fe.

Attorney General Hector Balderas' office is prosecuting Griego.

The new charges include 13 perjury counts, each of which are fourth-degree felonies, for lying on several of his campaign finance reports between 2012 and 2015. He also faces two separate charges for filing false campaign reports in October 2015 and April 2016, both misdemeanors.

On top of this, Griego is charged with five counts of embezzlement for spending more than \$9,100 of campaign and political action committee money "for his own use" between 2012 and 2014. He also faces one fraud count for wrongfully using \$2,000 from his senatorial campaign account in June 2012. All of the allegations of embezzlement are felony charges.

Only one criminal charge against Griego details how he allegedly misspent campaign money, and that's a limitation on campaign funds expenditures charge for his Aug. 15, 2015 spending at an Alex Safety Lane auto repair shop, a misdemeanor.

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Griego, a longtime state senator and Santa Fe city councilor, resigned from the Legislature in March 2015 after using his legislative position to personally profit off of a sale of a state building. After he resigned, Griego continued to spend his campaign money.

Griego is scheduled to go on trial in October.

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