

Ex-Maryland Lawmaker Tawanna Gaines Daughter Pleads Guilty to Misusing Campaign Funds

Posted by [TBN\(Staff\)](#) On 11/08/2019

Photo of Tawanna P. Gaines

Greenbelt, MD – November 8, 2019 - Anitra Edmond, age 43, of New Carrollton, Maryland, the treasurer for the “Friends of Tawanna P. Gaines” campaign committee, pleaded guilty today to a federal wire fraud charge, admitting that she converted more than \$35,000 in campaign funds to her personal use.

The guilty plea was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Robert K. Hur and Special Agent in Charge Jennifer C. Boone of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Baltimore Field Office.

“Individuals who donate to a political campaign trust that their money will be used to support their candidate. Edmond abused that trust to enrich herself,” said United States Attorney Robert K. Hur. “Such a betrayal undermines everyone’s faith in government. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to find those who break the law, and bring them to justice.”

According to her plea agreement, from 2005 to the present, Edmond was the treasurer of the “Friends of Tawanna P. Gaines” (FTPG) candidate committee, which was the finance entity for the campaign of former Maryland State Delegate Tawanna P. Gaines. FTPG was a regulated state election campaign committee with a designated bank account, for which Edmond was the sole signatory and had possession of a debit/ATM card for the account.

Edmond admitted that from at least November 2012 through June 2018, she defrauded the campaign and its contributors of more than \$35,000, converting the campaign funds for her personal use. Specifically, Edmond deposited checks from some campaign contributors directly into her personal bank account, instead of the FTPG account. Edmond also received and deposited campaign contributions into the FTPG account, then converted them to her own use without causing the contributions to be identified on campaign finance reports made to the Maryland State Board of Elections.

As detailed in her plea agreement, Edmond used the campaign funds from the FTPG account to pay her personal expenses, such as fast food, hair styling, personal phone bills, and rent for a separate business. In addition, during the course of the scheme, and in violation of Maryland campaign finance law, Edmond withdrew from the FTPG account a total of approximately \$7,080 in cash from ATM machines, including an \$800 withdrawal on June 25, 2018. The total loss as a result of Edmond’s involvement was at least \$35,188.63. As part of her plea agreement, Edmond is required to forfeit and pay restitution in that amount.

Edmond faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison for wire fraud. U.S. District Judge Theodore D. Chuang has scheduled sentencing for February 24, 2020. She is released on her own recognizance under the supervision of U.S. Pretrial Services.

Former Maryland State Delegate Tawanna P. Gaines, age 67, of Berwyn Heights, Maryland, previously pleaded guilty to a federal wire fraud charge, admitting that she converted more than \$22,000 in campaign funds to her personal use. U.S. District Judge Theodore D. Chuang has scheduled sentencing for Gaines on January 3, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.

United States Attorney Robert K. Hur commended the FBI for its work in this investigation. Mr. Hur thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas P. Windom, who is prosecuting these cases.

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