

FEBRUARY 1, 2019: RONALD CHESEK

STATEMENT OF FACTS IN SUPPORT OF THE GUILTY PLEA

Beginning on February 16, 1993, the Defendant, Ronald I. Chesek (hereinafter “Defendant”), served as Treasurer for the “Friends of Joseph J. Minnick” campaign committee. In this role, Mr. Chesek was responsible for all funds belonging to the campaign, including maintaining the bank account and filing campaign finance reports on behalf of the committee. The campaign committee was established on February 16, 1988. The candidate, Joseph J. “Sonny” Minnick, was a five-term member of the Maryland House of Delegates.

On or about July 23, 2018, Office of the State Prosecutor received a complaint from the State Board of Elections regarding the campaign finance entity known as “Friends of Joseph J. Minnick.” The Audit and Enforcement Unit of the State Board of Elections had received a telephone call from the wife of Mr. Joseph Minnick, the candidate for the campaign committee, stating that although he had passed away on October 12, 2015 and the Chairperson, Ronald C. Muir, had passed away on February 11, 2017, she was still receiving notices regarding the filing of the committee’s campaign finance reports and had been unable to reach the Defendant.

An investigation revealed that, from on or about July 9, 2013 through and including on or about September 17, 2017, and pursuant to one scheme and continuing course of conduct, the Defendant willfully and knowingly exerted unauthorized control over campaign funds belonging to the committee. The total theft from the campaign committee amounted to \$13,045. A review of the First Mariner Bank records showed that during the above-mentioned time frame, the Defendant wrote numerous unauthorized checks from the “Friends of Joseph J. Minnick” campaign account to himself and cashed same for his personal use and benefit. Records from the campaign account of “Friends of Joseph J. Minnick” showed that the Defendant was the sole signatory on the committee’s bank account. The bank records also revealed that on August 10, 2018, four days after the Defendant received notice of investigators subpoenaing the campaign bank account, he wrote a check from his personal bank account to the campaign account of “Friends of Joseph J. Minnick” paying the monies back.

If called to testify, witnesses would identify Ronald Chesek, as the Defendant, sitting at trial table with counsel and that he was not authorized and never had permission to transfer or use the campaign funds for his personal expenses or benefit.

All of these events occurred in the State of Maryland.