

# Bill Sizemore jailed on contempt of court charges

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Associate Editor

The law may be starting to catch up with diehard union foe Bill Sizemore. At a Dec. 1 court appearance, Multnomah County Judge Janice Wilson ordered Sizemore jailed for contempt of court.

It was his fourth contempt of court charge relating to an eight-year-old lawsuit by two teachers unions against Sizemore's ballot measure operation. After a 2002 trial, a jury found that two Sizemore-run groups were guilty of a pattern of fraud and forgery in getting anti-union measures on the 2000 ballot. Sizemore was ordered to pay \$2.5 millions in damages to the Oregon Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers - Oregon, which had spent money to fight the measures. And the judge issued a detailed injunction barring Sizemore personally from committing similar acts.

The most recent contempt charge stems from Sizemore's creation of American Tax Research Foundation (ATRF) in 2006. ATRF, a sham charity incorporated in Nevada, was used to launder contributions that supported Sizemore and his family while he worked to get five initiatives on this year's ballot.

"Mr. Sizemore is so blinded by his hatred of unions, who are plaintiffs in this case, that he seems to have concluded that he is not required to follow the law," Judge Wilson wrote in her ruling from the bench.

It took over two hours for Wilson to read her judgment, after which sheriff's



Bill Sizemore's booking photo

deputies led Sizemore away in handcuffs.

Wilson called Sizemore's violations of the injunction disturbing. "Together with Mr. Sizemore's willingness to lie under oath, they reflect not merely contempt of court in the legal sense, but contempt for the court, the judicial branch of government and its processes and judgements — indeed for the rule of law."

Confronted with evidence that he was using ATRF to circumvent the court order, Sizemore promised Judge Wilson in October that he would have ATRF file tax and charitable forms it was supposed to have filed in 2006 and 2007. Incredibly, he later withdrew that promise on the grounds that he might be incriminating himself because the Oregon Department of Justice might conclude the reports weren't

truthful.

"The judge was mighty upset with him," said AFT-Oregon Executive Director Dick Schwarz.

In her ruling, Wilson detailed how Sizemore set up a complicated web of organizations to allow donors to claim deductions for the contributions, and to shield their support from public scrutiny.

Beginning in 2006, a little over \$1.1 million passed through ATRF: \$913,000 from Nevada millionaire Loren Parks and about \$151,000 from Hire Calling Public Affairs, which is controlled by Klamath Falls millionaire Dick Wendt, owner of Jeld-Wen, Inc.

As little as \$14,000 of that amount went to support ATRF's stated mission "to research and publish the fiscal impact of real and proposed ballot measures."

Most of the money — about \$856,000 — landed in Sizemore's pocket. Just under \$700,000 was paid to Bill Sizemore himself; \$32,000 to his wife Cindy; and \$174,000 to CBS Consulting, a for-profit corporation she owned on paper. There was also \$15,000 for a down payment for land in his wife's name, \$20,000 to buy her a Pontiac GrandAm, and a \$150,000 loan to get his \$1.5 million home in Beaver Creek ready for sale. ATRF money paid an auctioneer to sell his house, went to purchase a time share in Mexico, paid the Sizemore family's grocery bills, restaurant tabs, and on and on.

Sizemore tried to hide his control of ATRF, listing his mother and a long-

time friend as its corporate officers.

"It's sad that it had to come to this," said AFT-Oregon's Schwarz. "These were simple requirements, like unions and other organizations have to follow,

additional attorney fees and costs, added the money raised through ATRF to the earlier jury award owed, and announced that the union plaintiffs will have broad power to subpoena records

from Sizemore's groups and two of his close associates.

Wilson ordered Sizemore jailed until he files the required forms, or until June 1, 2009.

Sizemore was still in jail as of press time.

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Judge Janice Wilson

filing not-for-profit tax returns and obeying the rules and regulations regarding the organizations."

In the ruling, Judge Wilson extended the earlier injunction five more years, ordered Sizemore to pay the unions'

[Wilson's 46-page legal opinion is available at [www.nwlabornpress.org](http://www.nwlabornpress.org). It contains dozens of pages of lurid detail about Sizemore's operation, plus a four-page appendix listing "examples of deceit by Mr. Sizemore."]

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