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Text alerts

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Couple charged with embezzling federal funds in Detroit

Santiago Esparza / The Detroit News

Detroit — A couple accused of embezzling federal funds meant to pay for community projects were arraigned today after they were extradited from Arkansas.

Gregory Gray, 56, and Cheryl Gray, 52, are charged in an arrest warrant with three counts of embezzlement of more than \$100,000, three counts of larceny by conversion of more than \$20,000, and failure to file/filing false tax forms. The charges are felonies and could net them up to 20 years in prison if found guilty.

Police arrested the couple March 17 in Pine Buff, Ark. Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy issued an arrest warrant for the couple in January, alleging they received federal grant money earmarked to help build the Detroit Theatre for Dramatic Arts in Greektown but used it for themselves.

The Grays were arraigned by video in 36th District Court. Bond was set at \$250,000 cash or surety and a preliminary examination was set for 8:30 a.m. April 6.

"The message here is clear: if you try to defraud HUD, we're coming after you even if we have to chase offenders across the Midwest," said Mike Stephens, acting inspector general for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. "We are motivated to do so because like all American taxpayers, we are appalled that some people try to abuse these programs at the expense of families in need."

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Page One PDF
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Auto Shows
Auto Reviews
Auto Photos
Autos Talk
Test Drive blog
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