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## NEWS

### 10th guilty plea made in bribery scheme

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A 61-year-old Baton Rouge man on Tuesday admitted his role in a bribery scheme involving City Court, bringing to 10 the number of people who have pleaded guilty in the ongoing federal probe.

Robert L. Stevens, who was charged by federal prosecutors in March, pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court to a charge of conspiracy in aid of racketeering.

Stevens admitted accepting bribes from individuals with pending matters in City Court and sharing the bribery proceeds with now-former senior city prosecutor Flichter Bell, who would arrange for the matters to be dismissed or fixed.

Bell pleaded guilty in the case late last year after prosecutors announced the continuing investigation, dubbed Operation Illegal Motion.

A bill of information that prosecutors filed against Stevens earlier this year says he "was retired and had no official employment at the Baton Rouge City Court or elsewhere."

Interim U.S. Attorney J.S. "Stan" Lemelle said Tuesday he had nothing to add to that description of Stevens.

Operation Illegal Motion has resulted in charges against 10 people, all of whom have now pleaded guilty. All are awaiting sentencing.

The probe involves Baton Rouge city and state district courts.



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