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## NEWS

# Former Councilman Sentenced for Forgery



by: [Eric Deabill](#)

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A former councilman from Lackawanna County will spend time in prison after pleading guilty to election code violations.

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Gallagher was the top vote getter when he ran for his borough council seat.

His attorney said the six absentee ballots he improperly forged wouldn't have impacted the outcome of the race but prosecutors say this case was important to show the public the integrity of the election process will be protected.

Standing before a judge, former Taylor councilman Eugene Gallagher said he has done a lot of "soul searching" since his arrest last year and has changed for the better.

His mother agrees.

"He has changed a whole lot, a whole lot. He's really sincere and my son is good-hearted. He's a good person," Shirley Gallagher said.

Despite a request for leniency, a judge ordered the 35-year-old to spend four years on probation with the first four months in prison.

Gallagher pleaded guilty to forgery for helping several people register for and get absentee ballots in a 2013 election.

When the ballots arrived at the resident's home, prosecutors say Gallagher took control of them and cast votes with them.

"He took, into his own hands, the voting rights of a number of individuals and just for the sanctity of the elections it's an important message sent by the judge," Assistant District Attorney Brian Gallagher (no relation) said.

The judge also sentenced Gallagher to at least five days in jail for an unrelated DUI count.

The judge indicated the 35-year-old has had more than six brushes with the law dating back to 1999.

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haunt you,” defense attorney Paul Walker said.

Since his guilty plea, Gallagher was forced to resign from Taylor borough council.

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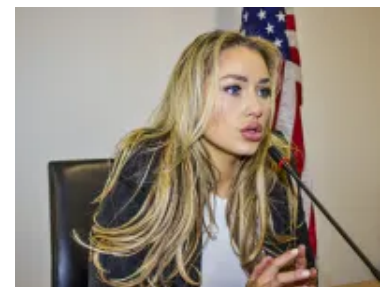

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