

U.S. drops charges against Sen. Stevens

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The corruption case against former Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens has been dropped by the U.S. Justice Department, a statement issued by the department said.

The 85-year-old Republican lawmaker was convicted last October on seven counts of lying on federal financial disclosure forms about free services he received, many for the renovation of his Alaska home.

Sentencing of Stevens had been delayed amid charges by an FBI agent of prosecutorial misconduct in the case. Throughout the trial, Stevens maintained his innocence.

"After careful review, I have concluded that certain information should have been provided to the defense for use at trial. In light of this conclusion, and in consideration of the totality of the circumstances of this particular case, I have determined that it is in the interest of justice to dismiss the indictment and not proceed with a new trial," said U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder in a statement.

Stevens was first appointed to the U.S. Senate in December 1968 when the state of Alaska was less than 10 years old.

He lost his bid for re-election last November to Democrat Mark Begich.

Assistant U.S. Attorney General Matthew Friedrich charged Stevens' hid "hundreds of thousands of freebies" he received from an oil field services company.

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