

Winston Lands Judgment Against Former Aviation Company CEO

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Winston & Strawn won a major victory for client Cambata Industries—a network of family-owned aviation companies based in Florida and Virginia—by obtaining a judgment of nearly \$13 million against a former officer and director who had looted the companies for almost a decade.

The defendant, Nelson Cambata, was the President and CEO of the four family-owned businesses. During our successful representation of his mother and two siblings in a tax investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice and Internal Revenue Service, we uncovered that he had embezzled millions of dollars to purchase, among other things, some 200 high-end automobiles. After removing him from all the companies and replacing management, we assisted new management in liquidating the family companies' assets. We also obtained, after much resistance, a promissory note for the full \$13 million that was embezzled.

After paying on the note for several years, Nelson Cambata stopped paying and sued for rescission of the note, alleging that it was invalid for duress and lack of consideration. On behalf of our client, we counter-sued for the full amount owed. Winston obtained a dismissal of the rescission claims and successfully narrowed the case to the defendant's allegation that our client had waived its rights under the note. After just one day of trial, the court ruled from the bench in our favor, awarding our client the entire outstanding balance under the note plus pre- and post-judgment interest.

The Washington, D.C.-based Winston team consisted of Co-managing Partner Tom Buchanan and Associate Eimeric Reig.

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