



**Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury**

*August 5, 2024*

## **Executive Director of Energy Efficient Schools Initiative Faces Theft Charge**

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office has resulted in a criminal information being filed against Paul Cross for one count of theft over \$10,000. Cross is the executive director of the Energy Efficient Schools Initiative (EESI) in Tennessee.

The EESI was established in 2008 with a one-time allotment of \$90 million derived from excess lottery funds. Its purpose is to provide Tennessee's public K-12 schools access to low-interest revolving loans that fund energy-efficient projects. The EESI is directed by a 12-member council and is attached to the Tennessee Department of Education.

Investigators determined that Cross misappropriated at least \$11,130 by failing to report leave when he was not working between 2021 and 2023. Cross claimed to be working at least 210 hours of time when he was absent from work. Investigators calculated Cross was paid approximately \$53 per hour for this time.

Cross admitted to investigators that he did not work the hours he claimed on his timesheet because he knew he would need extra leave in the following months due to personal issues, and he knew he would not have the leave balances to cover his time off work.

Investigators also noted that Cross used his state-issued computer for personal reasons on numerous occasions.

On August 1, 2024, a criminal information was presented in Bedford County against Paul Cross on one count of theft over \$10,000.

To view the investigative report, go to [tncot.cc/doireports](https://tncot.cc/doireports). To view a map depicting Comptroller investigations, go to [tncot.cc/mappinginvestigations](https://tncot.cc/mappinginvestigations)

If you suspect fraud, waste, or abuse of public money in Tennessee, call the Comptroller's toll-free hotline at 800.232.5454, or file a report online at: [tncot.cc/fraud](https://tncot.cc/fraud). Follow us on X/Twitter [@TNCOT](https://twitter.com/TNCOT) and Instagram [@tncot](https://www.instagram.com/tncot)

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