



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott  
Eastern District of California

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## **MORTGAGE BROKER PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGAL KICKBACK AND TAX VIOLATIONS**

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that WILLIAM T. BRIDGE, 41, of San Francisco, California entered a guilty plea before United States District Court Judge William B. Shubb in connection with a widespread mortgage fraud scheme centered in the Stockton, California area. BRIDGE pleaded guilty today to one count of filing a false tax return and three counts of paying illegal kickbacks to a loan coordinator at Long Beach Mortgage, a former subsidiary of Washington Mutual, Inc., in connection with the funding of subprime mortgages in the Sacramento and Stockton areas between 2003 and 2006. BRIDGE also admitted that in each of the tax years 2003 through 2006 he derived more than \$10,000 from criminal activity involving fraudulent loans funded by Long Beach Mortgage.

The case is the product of an extensive investigation conducted by the FBI and the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI). The investigation is continuing.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Benjamin B. Wagner and Courtney J. Linn, who are prosecuting the case, BRIDGE admitted that in each of the tax years ending 2003, 2004, and 2005 he grossly under-reported his income from his mortgage business. For the tax year ending December 31, 2003, he reported gross receipts of \$955,990 when in fact he received approximately \$2,438,823. For the tax year ending December 31, 2004, he reported gross receipts of \$630,070 when in fact he received \$1,940,208. For tax year 2005, he reported gross

receipts of \$747,628 when in fact he received approximately \$1,503,033. He caused a 2006 tax return to be prepared with the intent to inflict further tax losses, but did not file it. The total tax loss to the United States for tax years 2003 through 2006 exceeds \$1,000,000, which sum BRIDGE agrees to pay as restitution.

BRIDGE also pleaded guilty to paying illegal kickbacks to a loan coordinator at Long Beach Mortgage in violation of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (RESPA). In connection with loans made by Long Beach Mortgage, which were secured by residential real property in the Sacramento and Stockton areas, BRIDGE paid a loan coordinator working for Long Beach Mortgage more than \$120,000 between July 2003 and March 2007. The payments were made as part of an informal agreement between BRIDGE and the loan coordinator in which the loan coordinator would use his position at Long Beach Mortgage to facilitate the processing or fraudulent mortgage loan applications on behalf of BRIDGE.

“Today’s conviction illustrates federal law enforcement’s strong response to the mortgage fraud problem that helped fuel the subprime lending crisis in this and other regions of the country,” said U.S. Attorney McGregor Scott. “This office, with the aid of the FBI, IRS, and other state and federal law enforcement agencies, intends to use every appropriate tool, including criminal tax charges, to bring those responsible to justice.”

BRIDGE is scheduled to be sentenced before Judge Shubb on September 2, 2008, at 8:30 a.m. The maximum penalty for the tax offense is three years in prison, a fine of up to \$100,000, or both. The maximum penalty for each of the illegal kickback violations is 12 months in prison, a fine of up to \$10,000, or both. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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