



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

*United States Attorney Donald W. Washington
Western District of Louisiana*

United States Courthouse • 300 Fannin Street, Suite 3201 • Shreveport, Louisiana 71101-3068 • (318) 676-3600
United States Courthouse • 800 Lafayette Street, Suite 2200 • Lafayette, Louisiana 70501-7206 • (337) 262-6618

For Immediate Release
January 16, 2008

Contact: Donald W. Washington (337-262-6618)
William J. Flanagan (318-676-3600)

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/law>

LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA ATTORNEY SENTENCED FOR BANK FRAUD AND FOR FORGING CLIENT SETTLEMENT CHECKS

Defendant ordered to pay over \$700,000 in restitution

Lafayette, Louisiana . . . United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced that **MEL CREDEUR**, a former attorney living in Lafayette, Louisiana, was sentenced this week by Chief United States District Judge Richard T. Haik to **spend 41 months in prison**, followed by 5 years of supervised release. **CREDEUR** was also ordered to pay \$769,055 in restitution.

U.S. Attorney Washington stated: "By position, oath, and responsibility, lawyers are bound to obey the law and serve as examples for others. This defendant broke the law and now faces severe consequences - a long prison term. Hopefully, this tragedy will serve to remind us all that no one is above the law."

CREDEUR pleaded guilty to one count of making false statements to a bank and one count of forging securities of private entities. A superseding indictment was returned in June 2007 charging **CREDEUR**, age 52, with 9 counts of making false statements to a bank and 24 counts of forged securities of private entities. An investigation by the FBI revealed that beginning in 2002 while practicing law in Lafayette, **CREDEUR** established attorney/client lines of credit at a local bank which he used to finance

his personal injury lawsuits. **CREDEUR** was obligated to pay off the bank's line of credit after receiving funds generated by settling civil cases. On numerous occasions, when settlement proceeds were received by **CREDEUR**, instead of repaying the bank's line of credit, he requested extensions of time with the local bank and gave false reasons as to why the extensions were needed. In some instances, **CREDEUR** never repaid the line of credit.

Further investigation revealed that in 2003, **CREDEUR** opened several business accounts at another local bank, including a trust account, checking and payroll checking account, and personal accounts. **CREDEUR** admitted to forging the settlement checks from insurance companies received for certain clients and depositing the proceeds into his account without the client's knowledge or consent.

CREDEUR's law license was suspended in August 2007. **CREDEUR** is scheduled to report to the Bureau of Prisons to begin serving his sentence on January 23, 2008.

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Lafayette Resident Agency, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kelly P. Uebinger.

###