



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TAMPA ACCOUNTANT CHARGED WITH LOAN FRAUD

Tampa, Florida - United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill today announced the return of an indictment against JOSE I. ROMAN, a 44-year-old resident of Tampa, Florida, charging him with four counts of making false statements to the Bank of Tampa in connection with commercial loans obtained by him or his clients. The maximum penalty for each count in the indictment is thirty years' imprisonment and a fine of \$1 million. ROMAN is expected to surrender to the authorities on Monday, June 23, 2008.

According to the indictment, ROMAN was an accountant in private practice in Tampa, working on behalf of clients who needed commercial loans. The indictment specifically alleges that Roman submitted false statements to the Bank of Tampa on behalf of those clients in the form of business or personal financial statements showing overstated assets or understated liabilities, or bogus tax returns with overstated income entries, for the purpose of influencing the Bank to issue the loans. The indictment also alleges that ROMAN applied for one loan on behalf of one of his own companies and submitted bogus tax returns as part of that application. The face amount of the loans fraudulently obtained totaled \$231,000.

The criminal investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Terry A. Zitek.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until proven guilty.