



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill
Middle District of Florida

Tampa

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CONTACT: STEVE COLE

PHONE: (813) 274-6136

FAX: (813) 274-6300

TAMPA ACCOUNTANT PLEADS GUILTY TO LOAN FRAUD

Tampa, Florida - Today JOSE I. ROMAN, a 44-year-old resident of Tampa, pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge Thomas B. McCoun III to one count of making false statements to the Bank of Tampa in connection with a commercial loan obtained by him on behalf of one of his companies. The maximum penalty Roman faces is 30 years' imprisonment and a fine of \$1 million. A sentencing date has not been set.

According to court documents, ROMAN was an accountant in private practice in Tampa, working on behalf of clients who needed commercial loans. 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. ROMAN applied for one loan in an amount of \$100,000.00 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.