



Department of Justice

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Middle District of Florida

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CLEARWATER MAN SENTENCED TO TEN YEARS FOR MORTGAGE FRAUD

TAMPA, FL - U.S. District Judge Elizabeth A. Kovachevich today sentenced Graham Daniel Kligerman, age 34, of Clearwater, to ten years' imprisonment, to be followed by three years of supervised release, for conspiring to commit bank, mail and wire fraud. Kligerman was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$6.5 million. Kligerman pled guilty on December 18, 2007.

According to court documents, starting in January 2004, Kligerman joined in a mortgage foreclosure rescue fraud conspiracy. More than fifty homeowners, in jeopardy of losing their homes to foreclosure, fell prey to a scheme through which their homes were sold to straw purchasers who were then supposed to lease the homes back to the original homeowners. Lenders lent money to these straw purchasers under the belief that they were buying the houses for themselves from the original homeowners. Invariably the straw purchasers borrowed more money than was owed on the first mortgage, and the difference - the equity from the homes - went to the conspirators. Kligerman, a disbarred Florida lawyer, conducted the closings for approximately sixty of these transactions.

United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton stated, "People in trouble with their mortgage need to be very careful they do not fall prey to these types of schemes. Our

office will continue to investigate and prosecute those who take advantage of homeowners when they are most vulnerable.”

"This is a perfect example of how the Secret Service, local law enforcement, and the United States Attorney's Office are working together to address a problem that has real community impact," said John Joyce, Special Agent in Charge of the United States Secret Service, Tampa Field Office.

The case was investigated by United States Secret Service and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office as part of the Middle District of Florida Mortgage Fraud Task Force. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas N. Palermo.