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Comptroller Fines Former Texas Bank Chairman
\$250,000 For Repeatedly Breaching His Fiduciary Duty

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) today announced that it ordered Charles R. Vickery, Jr., former senior chairman of the board of First National Bank of Bellaire in Bellaire, Texas, to pay a \$250,000 civil money penalty. Comptroller of the Currency Eugene A. Ludwig found that Mr. Vickery had repeatedly breached his fiduciary duty to the bank as a result of his directing the bank to make a series of loans to a Houston real estate developer in the early 1990s and diverting title insurance premiums from the loans for his personal use.

The Comptroller's decision increased the civil money penalty recommended by the administrative law judge who presided over a hearing in Houston on the case in June 1996 from \$159,000 to \$250,000. The judge also recommended that Mr. Vickery be prohibited from participation in the conduct of the affairs of federally insured depository institutions for three years. The Federal Reserve Board on April 14 altered the judge's recommendation by issuing a permanent removal order prohibiting Mr. Vickery from being involved in the banking industry. Mr. Ludwig signed the OCC order on April 2.

Mr. Vickery, a retired lawyer, is a major shareholder at the First National Bank of Bellaire, as well as several other Houston area banks, including Texas National Bank of Baytown, Mayde Creek Bank in Katy, Texas Coastal Bank in Pasadena, and First Bank of Dear Park.

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The OCC charters, regulates and supervises approximately 2,800 national banks and 66 federal branches and agencies of foreign banks in the U.S., accounting for more than half the nation's banking assets. Its mission is to ensure a safe, sound and competitive national banking system that supports the citizens, communities and economy of the United States.