



Department of Justice

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

January 9, 2013

For Immediate Release

FORMER LOCAL REAL ESTATE BROKER PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL FRAUD CHARGES

St. Louis, MO - Jerrick Hawkins pled guilty to multiple fraud charges involving a scheme to defraud lenders by submitting false information on real estate loan applications. Most of the loans made as a result of the scheme went into default because the borrowers failed to make payments on the loans, resulting in more than \$1 million in losses to the U.S. and financial institutions.

According to the facts stated in court during the plea, from at least 2007 until as late as September 2011, Hawkins recruited various individuals to apply for conventional and FHA loans to purchase properties in the St. Louis area. Hawkins directed borrowers to supply false employment and income information on loan applications and caused false documents to be submitted in support of the loan applications, including pay stubs, W-2s, gift letters and verification of employment forms. In order to conceal the fraud, Hawkins arranged for the verification of the false information by either directing others to verify it or by verifying it himself. He received substantial monetary payments, either directly or through third party entities, in connection with the loans made as a result of the fraud scheme.

Hawkins, 28, St. Louis, 63136, pled guilty to one felony count of bank fraud and two felony counts of making false statements before United States District Judge Audrey Fleissig. Sentencing has been set for April 4, 2013.

Bank fraud carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison and/or fines up to \$1 million; each count of making false statements carries a maximum of five years prison and/or fines up to \$250,000. In determining the actual sentences, a Judge is required to consider the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide recommended sentencing ranges.

This case was investigated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Inspector General, the Federal Housing Finance Agency Office of Inspector General and the Postal Inspection Service. Assistant United States Attorney Reginald Harris is handling the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.

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*IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
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