

## U.S. Attorney's Report to the District

Congress recently agreed on a federal budget for this fiscal year which should somewhat improve the budgetary circumstances of the U.S. Attorneys' Offices compared to last year. For most of 2013, this office and every other U.S. Attorney's Office in the country labored under the "sequester" – significant budget cuts which eliminated funds for training, travel and operational expenses, and prevented the hiring of personnel to replace departing employees. In addition, the federal government was shut down for 16 days, during which support staff and the civil attorneys who recover huge sums of money owed to the federal government were sent home and prohibited from working. In spite of those constraints, this office brought in tens of millions of dollars for the American taxpayer last year, demonstrating once again that cutting the relatively small budgets of the U.S. Attorneys is fiscally illogical – it impedes the work of attorneys who bring in much more money than they cost taxpayers.

In fiscal year 2013, which ended September 30, we collected over \$75.6 million on criminal and civil judgments. In civil cases, we received over \$73 million in payments arising from cases involving fraud against the government, negligent destruction of public resources, and other claims. Major civil collections included \$14.2 million in a False Claims Act case against a health company, and over \$50 million in tort cases arising from wildfires on National Forest land in this district. In criminal cases, we collected over \$2.4 million in restitution for victims of crimes. These amounts are actual funds collected in FY 2013, not judgment amounts. A small portion of those recoveries came in cases worked jointly with other Department of Justice offices. These figures do not include any part of a multi-billion dollar settlement with JPMorgan that was announced late last year.

In addition, we brought in over \$6.1 million in criminal and civil forfeitures in fiscal year 2013. Some of those funds went to compensate crime victims for their losses through the Justice Department's restoration and remission program. A smaller portion will be delivered to cooperating federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies for use in criminal investigations, training, and other law enforcement purposes.

Our success was mirrored by U.S. Attorneys' offices nationally. In fiscal year 2013, the U.S. Department of Justice collected more than \$8 billion in civil and criminal actions on behalf of American taxpayers. This amount represents nearly three times the direct appropriations by Congress that pay for the 94 U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the main DOJ litigating divisions.

Each year, this office recovers far more than it costs to operate the office. In the four years since FY 2010, this office has collected a total of over \$328.5 million in civil and criminal cases. Three of the four largest years ever in terms of collections by this office were during that time frame. These are funds owed to the American taxpayer and to victims of crime – money that otherwise would have padded the bank accounts of defendants who perpetrated frauds on the American people or damaged federal lands and properties. Cutting the resources available to do that work is no way to protect the taxpayer.

If you would like to communicate with our office, contact the main number in Sacramento, or submit a suggestion by clicking on the button below. Thank you.

United States Attorney

*Benjamin B. Wagner*