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#### FORMER WORCESTER ATTORNEY PLEADS TO FRAUD, TAX VIOLATIONS

BOSTON, MA - A Worcester man pleaded guilty today in federal court to two counts of wire fraud and one count of evasion of payment of taxes.

United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan, Warren T. Bamford, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation New England Field Division and Douglas A. Bricker, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation - Boston Field Office, announced today that ALAN MASON, age 61, of 26 Pine Hill Road, Princeton, MA, pleaded guilty to two counts of wire fraud and one count of evasion of payment of taxes.

At today's plea hearing, the prosecutor told the Court that had the case proceeded to trial, the government's evidence would have proven that MASON was an attorney whose law practice was centered on providing legal services in connection with real estate closings, and who conducted business in Worcester under the name Alan Mason Legal Services, Inc. MASON was also involved in the purchase and sale of real estate. According to the prosecutor, from at least June 2001 through June 2006, MASON engaged in a fraudulent scheme in which he took funds he received from banks for the purpose of paying off prior liens on properties for closings he was handling, and converted those funds for his own personal and business purposes.

In furtherance of that fraudulent scheme, the prosecutor stated that MASON prepared documents, including checks and HUD-1 forms, which made it appear that he had in fact paid off the prior liens. Instead, MASON made monthly mortgage payments to the prior lienholders in order to prevent the loans from going into default and thus alerting the buyers, sellers and new lenders that the prior lien had not been paid off. As an agent of the title insurance company Stewart Title, MASON issued title insurance policies to real estate buyers and lenders which indemnified them against title defects, even though he knew that the titles were defective because he had not paid off prior lienholders and had not obtained discharges of those liens. According to the prosecutor, MASON'S scheme defrauded more than ten lenders, including several federally insured financial institutions and Stewart Title, of more than \$6.6 million.

With respect to the tax charge, the prosecutor told the court that MASON evaded the payment of more than \$3 million in taxes by, among other things, setting up and controlling multiple real estate trusts and bank accounts using the names of employees and relatives but which did not identify MASON'S interest in writing to prevent the tax authorities from attaching those assets. MASON bought and sold real estate through those trusts and used the substantial profits for personal expenses such as home improvements, an antique clock collection, mortgage payments and investments in new properties.

Sentencing is scheduled for November 29, 2007 in Worcester. MASON faces up to 30 years imprisonment, to be followed by 5 years of supervised release, and a \$1 million fine on each of the two wire fraud counts, and 5 years imprisonment, to be followed by 3 years of supervised release and a \$100,000 fine on the tax count.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation New England Field Division and the Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation - Boston Field Office. It is being prosecuted by