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**CHICAGO U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE COLLECTED \$99 MILLION IN CIVIL
AND CRIMINAL DEBTS AND FORFEITURE ACTIONS IN FISCAL YEAR 2010**

Chicago office contributes to record financial recoveries nationwide

CHICAGO — The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois collected approximately \$99 million in fiscal year (FY) 2010, bringing its total collections for the last three fiscal years to nearly \$550 million. The collection of more than \$72.5 million in criminal and civil debts, coupled with an additional \$26.4 million collected through asset forfeiture, means that the office's total collections this past fiscal year amounted to more than three times its annual budget of approximately \$32 million, Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, announced today.

Nationally, collections by the U.S. Department of Justice in criminal and civil actions in FY 2010 reached an all-time high due to the record-breaking efforts of the 94 U.S. Attorneys' offices, which contributed to the collection of \$6.68 billion during the government's fiscal year.

During FY 2010, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Chicago collected \$21.5 million in criminal actions, including more than \$6.5 million in criminal fines; more than \$4.7 million in restitution owed to the federal government; and more than \$9.9 million in non-federal restitution owed to victims, including the victims of various investment frauds and Ponzi schemes. In civil actions, the office

collected \$51 million, including more than \$23.3 million from affirmative enforcement actions, with more than \$22.1 million of that amount resulting from health care fraud cases. The office's Financial Litigation Unit, which pursues post-judgment recoveries, collected more than \$27.5 million during the fiscal year.

"I am grateful for the hard work of the men and women in the office — and in particular the often overlooked work of our Civil Division and our Financial Litigation Unit," Mr. Fitzgerald said. "Our primary mission is to enforce the criminal and civil laws of the United States by prosecuting those who break the law, defending various United States agencies in civil suits and affirmatively enforcing the civil rights and remedies of all the residents of our district. But the attorneys and staff have done their work in a manner that not only pays for the entire budget of the office but returns an even greater sum to victims and to the government to fund other programs."

On the civil side, the office also negotiated an additional \$20 million settlement with a former Chicago area physician, who was sentenced in August to five years in prison for stealing \$13 million from Medicare and more than 30 other public and private health care insurance programs. The government anticipates concluding litigation relating to approximately \$10 million in funds seized from the physician in Fiscal Year 2011. The office's largest single collection in the last three fiscal years, which accounted for half of the \$550 million total collected during that time, was a \$225 million civil settlement paid by a health insurance company to resolve findings by a federal jury and a judge that its former Illinois subsidiary systematically avoided enrolling pregnant women and other high-risk patients in its Medicaid managed care program in Illinois.

In addition to the debts actually collected on the criminal side, the office currently has pending in various stages of litigation nearly 30 investment fraud cases, about half of which involve

classic Ponzi-type schemes, while others involve an array of illegal investment and trading practices. These cases combined involve approximately \$800 million in losses to more than 10,000 individual victims. The single largest of these cases alone alleges that thousands of victims lost approximately \$300 million through fraudulent investments in promissory notes and time-share resorts in Mexico.

The U.S. Attorney's Office is responsible for enforcing and collecting civil and criminal debts owed to the United States and criminal debts owed to federal crime victims. When defendants are convicted and sentenced in criminal cases, judges must impose restitution to victims of certain federal crimes who have suffered a physical injury or financial loss. The U.S. Attorney's Office is authorized to make efforts to collect criminal debts for 20 years after defendants are released from custody.

Statistics from the Justice Department indicate that the total amount collected nationwide in FY 2010 in criminal actions totaled \$2.84 billion in restitution, criminal fines, and felony assessments. While restitution is paid by Courts directly to the victim, criminal fines and felony assessments are paid to the Department's Crime Victims' Fund, which distributes the funds to state victim compensation and victim assistance programs.

In addition to criminal and civil debts, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Chicago collected approximately \$26.4 million in criminal and civil forfeitures, contributing to the nationwide collection of \$1.8 billion in asset forfeiture actions in FY 2010. Forfeited assets are deposited into either the Department of Justice Asset Forfeiture Fund or the Department of Treasury Forfeiture Fund and are used to restore funds to crime victims and for a variety of law enforcement purposes.

The statistics also indicate that \$3.84 billion was collected nationwide in civil actions. The largest civil collections were from affirmative civil enforcement cases, in which the United States

recovered government money lost to fraud or other misconduct or collected fines imposed on individuals and/or corporations for violations of federal health, safety, civil rights or environmental laws. In addition, civil debts were collected on behalf of several federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Internal Revenue Service, and Small Business Administration.

The nationwide collection totals for FY 2010 represent nearly a 30 percent increase in criminal collections and a 57 percent increase in civil collections over FY 2009. In FY 2009, the U.S. Attorneys' offices contributed to the collection of more than \$4.6 billion. Of the amount collected, \$2.23 billion was collected criminally and \$2.44 billion was collected civilly. The significant increase in collections was due to various large criminal restitution cases as well as large health care fraud cases.

For further information, the United States Attorneys' Annual Statistical Reports through FY 2009 can be found on the internet at http://www.justice.gov/usao/reading_room/foiamanuals.html.

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