



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian
Northern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 27, 2011
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nyn>

CONTACT: Richard S. Hartunian or
William C. Pericak
(518) 431-0247

CHRISTOPHER BASS SENTENCED TO OVER 12 ½ YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR ORCHESTRATING PONZI-STYLE SCHEME

Ordered to also Pay over \$5.3M in Restitution to Hundreds of Victims

ALBANY —United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian, James C. Spero, Special Agent in Charge, Homeland Security Investigations, Charles R. Pine, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division, William Leege, Resident Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service, and Clifford C. Holly, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced that **CHRISTOPHER BASS** was sentenced today by Senior United States District Judge Lawrence E. Kahn to **151 months incarceration**, to be followed by a period of three years supervised release, and ordered to pay restitution in the total amount of **\$5,308,340.02** to the victims of his *Ponzi*-style scheme involving entities formerly known under the name “Swiss Capital Harbor.” Bass, who has been in custody since his initial arrest in the case on February 8, 2010, was remanded following sentencing.

Bass, age 54, formerly of Troy and Menands, New York, had admitted at the time of his plea that he relocated from Europe to Albany County in or about May 2006 and, thereafter, from approximately January 1, 2007 through February 1, 2010, he promoted, managed and directed a fraudulent investment program involving the purchase and sale of securities to investors in the Capital Region and elsewhere. From January through August 2007, the fraudulent investment program operated under the name “Revisco Finanz AG” and, from August through December 2007, it operated under the names Revisco Finance USA and Revisco Finanz AG.” Thereafter, from

approximately December 2007 through February 1, 2010, Bass conducted the fraudulent investment program using the name “Swiss Capital Harbor/USA, LLC” and other variations utilizing the name “Swiss Capital Harbor.” At the time of his guilty plea last year, Bass admitted having solicited and accepted a total of over \$5.5M from more than 250 investors and, at sentencing today, the government indicated that additional investigation confirmed the total deposits were over **\$6.7M** from approximately **400** victims, more than **300** of whom suffered pecuniary loss as a result of their investments in the scheme. While Bass promised these victims that their funds would be sent to Europe for investment, the majority of the investor deposits were (1) disbursed to Bass or used to pay for his personal expenses, (2) used to repay investors who demanded a return of their initial investment or distribution of the income allegedly earned, as is common in such *Ponzi*-style schemes, and (3) used to pay for expenses incurred in operating the fraudulent investment program.

Bass further admitted at the time of his plea that, as part of his scheme, he caused periodic account statements to be issued that reported monthly returns and account balances that were false and grossly overstated, and that he made numerous additional false statements to prospective and actual investors, including that their investments were insured, risk free, or protected by a cash reserve account. At this point, no funds have been recovered to be applied toward the victims’ losses.

In addition to his plea to one count of wire fraud involving the fraudulent investment program, Bass also pled guilty to attempted evasion of taxes in connection with the Form 1040, U.S. Individual Income Tax Return that he filed for himself and his spouse for 2007, in which he falsely reported the amount of income that he received from operation of the fraudulent investment program. In substance, Bass received gross income of at least \$220,000 from the fraudulent investment program in 2007 with taxable income of at least \$145,936, whereas he falsely reported only \$114,732 in gross income and taxable income of \$49,507, resulting in a substantial income tax due and owing for 2007 of at least \$34,445. Bass was sentenced today to the statutory maximum of 60

months on the income tax count, to run concurrently with the sentence on his wire fraud conviction, for a total sentence of 151 months in prison.

A number of victim investors attended the sentencing proceeding, and five spoke to the Court about the financial and personal devastation suffered by them and their families as a result of Bass' scheme. The victims who spoke were representative of many who lost their retirement and other life savings, and had their life plans drastically altered by losses suffered as a result of their reliance on Bass and his promises.

United States Attorney Hartunian stated: "The significant incarceration sentence handed down by the Court today reflects the severe impact of investment fraud on the hard-working men and women who work and live in this community. Hundreds of people trusted Christopher Bass with their financial futures, and he greedily abused that trust and left in its place a swath of financial ruin. This office, working closely with our federal law enforcement partners, is committed to combating such heinous crimes, and bringing perpetrators such as Christopher Bass to justice."

The case was investigated by the Albany Offices of Homeland Security Investigations, the Criminal Investigation Division of the Internal Revenue Service, and the United States Secret Service, with the assistance of the Albany Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of New York.

CONTACT: Deputy Criminal Chief AUSA William C. Pericak, or
Supervisory Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert P. Storch,
both at (518) 431-0247

###