



***United States Attorney
Southern District of New York***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 10, 2008**

**CONTACT: U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
HERBERT HADAD, YUSILL SCRIBNER,
REBEKAH CARMICHAEL, JANICE OH
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
(914), 993-1900, (212) 637-2600**

**ORANGE COUNTY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO SCHEME
TO DEFRAUD HOMEOWNERS AND MORTGAGE BROKERS**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that RICCARDO WHITE pleaded guilty today in White Plains federal court to charges arising out of his participation in a scheme to defraud homeowners in the New York metropolitan area and mortgage brokers across the country. According to the Felony Information and statements made in court in connection with WHITE's plea:

WHITE, along with Gregory Cooper, Lawrence Burke, Zachary Cutler, and others, operating mainly from an office in Cooper's residence in Central Valley, Orange County, New York, engaged in a scheme to defraud homeowners around the New York metropolitan area through misrepresenting the terms of mortgages. The defendants contacted homeowners and offered them mortgages with low interest rates for as many as five years and attractive rate caps. The terms of the mortgages obtained by homeowners from the defendants were materially different from those offered by the defendants. The loss to the homeowners defrauded by the scheme was over \$1.3 million.

WHITE, along with Cooper, Burke, Cutler, and others, also engaged in a scheme to defraud residential mortgage brokers throughout the country. The defendants contacted residential mortgage brokers and sold them lists of names containing individuals purportedly interested in obtaining mortgages, as well as services associated with those lists. In actuality, the lists that they provided to the mortgage brokers were not lists of people interested in obtaining mortgages and the services the defendants

promised to provide were not provided. The loss to the residential mortgage brokers defrauded by the scheme was over \$350,000.

WHITE pleaded guilty before United States District Judge KENNETH M. KARAS. He is scheduled to be sentenced before Judge Karas on April 3, 2009, at 10 a.m. WHITE faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. Burke and Cutler each pleaded guilty to charges stemming from the same schemes. Burke pleaded to one count of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud and two counts of mail fraud on October 9, 2008. Cutler pleaded to one count of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud and one counts of mail fraud on August 11, 2008. Both are awaiting sentencing. Cooper is awaiting trial.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative work of the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Town of Woodbury (N.Y.) Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorney NICHOLAS McQUAID is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges against Cooper are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

08-283

###