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FINANCIAL FRAUD ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE HOSTS MORTGAGE FRAUD SUMMIT IN COLUMBUS

COLUMBUS – Representatives of the Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force (FFETF) met in Columbus today as part of a series of Mortgage Fraud Summits they are conducting around the United States. The task force, established by President Barack Obama in November 2009 to wage an aggressive, coordinated and proactive effort to investigate and prosecute financial crimes, is composed of representatives from a broad range of federal agencies, regulatory authorities, inspectors general, and state and local law enforcement.

According to the FBI's 2008 Mortgage Fraud Report, Ohio has the dubious honor of being among the "Top Ten Mortgage Fraud States" in the nation.

Today, the task force members including FFETF Executive Director Robb Adkins, Rita Ritzema, Deputy Assistant IG for Investigations, HUD Inspector General, and Jan Trigg, Supervisory Special Agent, FBI Washington, met with community members from around Ohio, banking, mortgage and real estate industry representatives and law enforcement officials to discuss the problem of mortgage fraud from a national, state and local perspective. In the morning panels, attendees discussed mortgage fraud trends around Ohio and the community impact of mortgage fraud. Participants also received information on Save the Dream Ohio, a multi-agency effort to help homeowners prevent foreclosure (www.savethedream.ohio.gov). In the afternoon, task force representatives will meet privately with law enforcement officials involved in the investigation of mortgage fraud.

Joining the members of the FFETF as hosts were Carter M. Stewart, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Steven M. Dettelbach, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, Ohio Attorney General Richard Cordray, Keith L. Bennett, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Cincinnati, Frank Figluzzi, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Cleveland.

The Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force is reaching out to communities through events like today's summit, and through efforts like StopFraud.gov, the task force's one-stop shop for the American people to learn how to protect themselves from fraud and to report it wherever - and however - it occurs.

The task force also partnered with Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, the Lawyer's Committee and NeighborWorks America to launch a consumer-friendly website, www.PreventLoanScams.org, which supports national, state and local law enforcement efforts. The website provides an accessible complaint form that can be filled out online and then entered into a nation-wide

database and serves as a nationwide clearinghouse and destination for loan modification scam information on complaints filed, laws and regulations, and enforcement actions

Mortgage fraud is a key focus of the Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force's efforts. The task force is working to improve efforts across the federal executive branch, and with state and local partners, to investigate and prosecute significant financial crimes, ensure just and effective punishment for those who perpetrate financial crimes, combat discrimination in the lending and financial markets, and recover proceeds for victims of financial crimes.

To learn more about the task force, visit StopFraud.gov.

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