

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ORANGE COUNTY MAN CONVICTED OF BANKRUPTCY FRAUD

Orlando, Florida – United States Attorney Maria Chapa Lopez announces that a federal jury has found Christopher Coburn (34, Winter Garden) guilty of five counts of bankruptcy fraud and two counts of falsification of records in a bankruptcy proceeding. He faces a maximum penalty of 5 years' imprisonment for each bankruptcy fraud count and up to 20 years in prison for each falsification of records count. His sentencing hearing has been scheduled for September 9, 2019.

According to testimony and evidence presented at trial, Coburn solicited homeowners whose mortgages were in default and offered to rescue their homes from foreclosure. In order to prevent the Federal National Mortgage Association ("Fannie Mae") and multiple financial institutions holding mortgages from lawfully foreclosing on homeowners' properties, Coburn engaged a bankruptcy fraud scheme in which he filed or caused to be filed fraudulent bankruptcy petitions in the name of the homeowner, without homeowner's knowledge or consent, just prior to the scheduled foreclosure sale dates. These fraudulent bankruptcies invoked the automatic stay provision of the bankruptcy code, preventing Fannie Mae and the

financial institutions from conducting lawful foreclosure sales and obtaining title to the property. The fraudulent bankruptcy petitions filed by Coburn enabled him to collect fees and allowed him to refer the properties to real estate agents in order to obtain ill-gotten commissions for short-sales. Coburn also filed other false and fraudulent bankruptcy forms in the names of some homeowners relied on by the Office of the United States Trustee and the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida.

This case was investigated by the Federal Housing Finance Agency—Office of Inspector General, with substantial assistance from the Office of the United States Trustee for the Middle District of Florida. It is being prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Chris Poor.