



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney A. Lee Bentley, III  
Middle District of Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 18, 2016

[WWW.USDOJ.GOV/USAO-MDFL](http://WWW.USDOJ.GOV/USAO-MDFL)

CONTACT: WILLIAM DANIELS

(813) 274-6388

## **NEW PORT RICHEY MAN INDICTED FOR IMPERSONATING A U.S. SENATOR**

Tampa, FL – United States Attorney A. Lee Bentley, III announces the unsealing of an indictment charging Sidney C. Hines (67, New Port Richey) with five counts of false impersonation of a federal officer or employee of the United States. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of three years in federal prison for each count.

According to the indictment, Hines received a mortgage loan secured by his home in New Port Richey and subsequently fell behind on his mortgage payments. In an effort to help delinquent borrowers such as Hines, the Federal National Mortgage Association (“Fannie Mae”) created the HomeSaver Advance (“HSA”) loan program. HSA allowed delinquent borrowers who were able to make future scheduled mortgage payments, but were unable to pay past due amounts immediately, to cure the delinquency by entering into an unsecured loan for the amount in the arrears. On October 15, 2008, Hines obtained a HSA loan for \$5,863.73.

Hines failed to make the required payments on his HSA loan and the loan was turned over to ClearSpring Loan Services, a debt collection agency. Beginning in March 2013 and continuing through the end of 2014, Hines impersonated a sitting United States Senator on multiple occasions in telephone calls that he made to ClearSpring. During

those calls, acting as the Senator, he stated that Hines's HSA loan was paid in full and that the loan should be removed from his credit report.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of one or more federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

This case was investigated by the United States Capitol Police and the Federal Housing Finance Agency – Office of Inspector General. It will be prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Chris Poor.

###