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MODESTO MAN SENTENCED IN TWO MORTGAGE FRAUD SCHEMES

FRESNO, Calif. - Tony Huy Havens, 42, of Modesto, was sentenced Monday by United States District Judge Lawrence J. O'Neill to three years and five months in prison for his role in two mortgage fraud schemes, United States Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner announced.

Havens had earlier pleaded guilty to committing mail fraud and wire fraud in the two schemes, which were charged in separate criminal cases.

According to the indictment in the first scheme, Havens devised an "advance fee" scheme that targeted victims in at least eight states who were seeking multi-million dollar loans for large construction projects that were in danger of foreclosure. Havens provided the victims with fraudulent documents that showed a third-party lender was prepared to make a loan to the victim. On Havens' instructions, the victims wire-transferred money into a bank account controlled by Havens to pay in advance certain costs associated with the loans. No loans were ever made. In total, Havens represented that he could arrange at least \$1.1 billion in financing for at least fifteen victim borrowers, and collected at least \$248,750 by wire transfers from these victim borrowers.

According to the indictment in the second scheme, Havens arranged to purchase a single family residence in Modesto using two relatives as straw buyers. He obtained a loan in the name of the straw buyers that exceeded the actual selling price of the property, and arranged to have a portion of the purchase price sent back to him, which he used as the down payment for the purchase.

The cases were the product of investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office, and the Federal Housing Financing Agency, Office of Inspector General. Assistant United States Attorneys Mark J. McKeon and Mia Giacomazzi prosecuted the cases.

Havens was ordered to self-surrender to begin serving his sentence on April 4, 2016.

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