



SIGTARP

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL
FOR THE TROUBLED ASSET RELIEF PROGRAM

ADVANCING ECONOMIC STABILITY THROUGH TRANSPARENCY, COORDINATED OVERSIGHT AND ROBUST ENFORCEMENT

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FORMER U.S. BANK MANAGER CHARGED WITH TAKING BRIBES FROM COLLECTIONS AGENCY THAT DEFRAUDED TARP BANKS

WASHINGTON, DC - The Office of the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program (SIGTARP) and U.S. Attorney for the District of Connecticut David B. Fein today announced that Wilbur Tate III, 48, of Dacula, Georgia, was arrested today on a federal criminal complaint charging him with conspiracy to commit bank bribery while he was an assistant vice president at U.S. Bank in Ohio. Tate appeared today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Linda T. Walker in Atlanta and was released on a \$50,000 bond.

“Tate, formerly in charge of debt collections at TARP recipient U.S. Bank, has been charged with accepting bribes from executives at Oxford Collection Agency in exchange for U.S. Bank’s business,” said Christy Romero, Special Inspector General for TARP (SIGTARP). “Senior Oxford Collection Agency executives have pleaded guilty to defrauding investors and creditors, including Webster Bank and other TARP recipients, in a \$10 million debt collection fraud scheme. Bribes to Tate allegedly began with expensive cigars and escalated to cash payments in cigar boxes of as much as \$5,000 per month. When Tate’s ‘cigars’ were late, on multiple occasions Tate allegedly reminded Oxford executives that payment was due. SIGTARP and our law enforcement partners will continue to safeguard taxpayers’ TARP funds and bring to justice those responsible for fraud related to TARP.”

According to the complaint and court documents filed in related cases, Oxford Collection Agency was a private financial services company that engaged in accounts receivables management, primarily debt collecting, with offices in New York, Pennsylvania, and Florida. Between 2007 and 2011, Oxford Collection Agency executives engaged in a multi-year scheme to defraud its lender, investors, and clients, including Webster Bank and other TARP recipients. The investigation also revealed that Oxford Collection Agency was actively involved in bribing bank officials.

The complaint alleges that Tate, an assistant vice president at U.S. Bank in Ohio from January 2004 through February 2011, was in charge of outsourcing collection accounts to collection agencies, including Oxford Collection Agency. Beginning in approximately August 2008 and continuing for more than two years, Oxford Collection Agency executives engaged in a bribery scheme with Tate in order to obtain and retain the business of U.S. Bank. As part of the scheme, Oxford executives initially provided Tate with boxes of expensive cigars, and subsequently sent Tate monthly cash payments of between \$2,500 and \$5,000, which were hidden in cigar boxes and mailed to Tate's residence in Mason, Ohio.

U.S. Bank and Webster Bank received funds through the U.S. Department of the Treasury Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP).

U.S. Attorney Fein stressed that a complaint is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. Charges are only allegations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

This ongoing investigation is being conducted by SIGTARP; the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and the Connecticut Securities, Commodities, and Investor Fraud Task Force. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Liam Brennan, Special U.S. Attorney John McReynolds, and Deputy U.S. Attorney Deirdre Daly, with the assistance of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia.

This prosecution was brought in coordination with President Barack Obama's Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force, which was established to wage an aggressive and coordinated effort to investigate and prosecute financial crimes. SIGTARP is a member of the task force. To learn more about the President's Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force, please visit www.StopFraud.gov.

About SIGTARP

The Office of the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program investigates fraud, waste, and abuse in connection with TARP.

To report suspected illicit activity involving TARP, dial the **SIGTARP Hotline**: 1-877-SIG-2009 (1-877-744-2009).

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