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**CONTACT: Michelle Gatchell
Deputy Director of Communications
614-466-3840
mgatchell@ag.state.oh.us**

Ex-Landlord of Local Properties Indicted For Mortgage Fraud

COLUMBUS – Attorney General Marc Dann and Franklin County Prosecutor Ron O'Brien announce the indictment of John Wanek as a result of a multi-million dollar mortgage fraud case investigated by the Central Ohio Mortgage Fraud Task Force.

Wanek, of Phoenix, Arizona was indicted by the Franklin County Grand Jury last week (3/26/08) for falsifying documents in order to get a loan, a loan which he defaulted on within a year. The indictment contained one count of engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity, two counts of securing writings by deception, two counts of forgery, two counts of theft, and two counts of falsification.

The indictment is the result of a task force investigation based on the mortgage lender coming to the prosecutor's office and reporting that Wanek might be committing mortgage fraud. The allegations surrounded Wanek's purchase of two Franklin County apartment complexes: Ashberry Village located on the west side of Columbus and Colonial Village located on the east side of Columbus. The two properties have gone into foreclosure for non-payment and have new owners.

The indictment alleges that Wanek obtained mortgages on the properties under false pretenses, and that data and documents, like possible income projections for renters, were falsified to facilitate the frauds to get him the loans.

The mortgages on the properties were worth more than \$15 million dollars; making this case Franklin County's largest dollar amount for a mortgage fraud case.

The Central Ohio Mortgage Fraud Task Force is coordinated by the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission, and it is headed up by the Columbus Division of Police, Economic Crime Unit. Participating agencies include the Ohio Attorney General's Office, the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office, the Upper Arlington Police Department, and the Office of Inspector General for Housing and Urban Development.

NOTE:

- Engaging in a Pattern of Corrupt Activity is a felony of the first degree
- Securing Writings by Deception is a felony of the second degree
- Theft, Forgery, and Falsification charges are felonies of the third degree

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