

Good government in action

Diligent work in the county recorder's office unravels a mortgage fraud case

Authorities say ██████ preyed on homeowners facing foreclosure. He told them he would buy their homes to keep them from ruining their credit. For a few hundred dollars, the owners would transfer their homes to him, believing he'd pay their mortgages.

██████ would then rent out the homes, collecting rent and security deposits. Authorities say he would not pay the mortgages, letting them go into foreclosure, leaving the renters unaware and the original homeowners on the hook. Prosecutors say ██████

did that about 70 times before he was arrested in January 2008.

██████ pleaded guilty in November to charges of false representation concerning titles. He was ordered to pay more than \$140,000 in fines and restitution.

He might never have been caught if not for the diligence of workers in the Clark County Recorder's Office. As Joe Schoenmann reported in Sunday's Las Vegas Sun, the investigation began when ██████, who works in the recorder's office, noticed the post office had returned about a dozen property transfer documents. What

made the returns suspicious is that all of the documents had been sent to the same post office box, so workers in the office tried to find out what happened.

What they found was a false address and that was the start of the unraveling of a mortgage fraud scheme.

Last week Secretary of State Ross Miller presented Recorder Debbie Conway a commendation during a ceremony held by the Clark County Commission. The commendation is fitting. By taking the time to investigate, the recorder's office helped stop a mortgage scam.

Well done.

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