



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Gregory G. Lockhart
Southern District of Ohio

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2009
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/ohs>

CONTACT: Fred Alverson
614-469-5715

FATHER AND SON SENTENCED FOR ROLES IN FRAUDULENT CREDIT CARD DEBT ELIMINATION SCHEME

Operators of Liberty Resources defrauded 450 victims out of more than \$2 million

COLUMBUS – Dan Wickline, age 62, and his son Chad Wickline, age 34, were sentenced in United States District Court here today for their roles in operating a Canal Winchester-based company that fraudulently advertised it could eliminate people’s credit card debt. Dan Wickline was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment. Chad Wickline was sentenced to 30 months imprisonment. Each man was also ordered to pay restitution to victims.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Gerald A. O’Farrell, Assistant Inspector in Charge, U.S. Postal Inspection Service and Jose A. Gonzalez, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, announced the sentence handed down today by U.S. District Judge Algenon L. Marbley.

The Wicklines sold customers a product through their company, Liberty Resources, that they guaranteed would eliminate customers’ credit card debt if they paid the fee, ranging from a few hundred to several thousand dollars. If the product was purchased, the customers received a document claiming that they were relieved from their credit card debt. The debt elimination product, Liberty Resources claimed, was based on what they claimed was a “loophole” in the banking laws.

Liberty Resources defrauded 450 victims out of more than \$2 million between 2002 and 2006.

“Customers were lulled into believing their debt was taken care of so they stopped paying creditors,” Lockhart said. “Many who stopped paying found that their credit histories were destroyed when they discontinued paying their credit card balances and the card issuers sued them for payment. Some people had to declare bankruptcy while others have had to come out of retirement to work off paying the debt. No one who purchased the program had their debt eliminated. ”

The sentence also requires each man to pay all federal income taxes owed, plus interest and penalties, on the money they received from Liberty and elsewhere between 2002 and 2006.

Each of the Wicklines pleaded guilty on July 9, 2008 to one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering. Chad Wickline also pleaded guilty to one count of mail fraud. Both men entered pleas roughly two weeks after their trials began.

Three other company officials also pleaded guilty in connection with the scheme and have been sentenced.

Lockhart commended the cooperative investigation by IRS agents and Postal Inspectors, along with Assistant U.S. Attorneys Marcia Harris and Dan Brown, who prosecuted the case.

#