

FBI PROBES 530 CORPORATE FRAUD CASES

(By Devlin Barrett)

(WASHINGTON)—The FBI is conducting more than 500 investigations of corporate fraud amid the financial meltdown, FBI Deputy Director John Pistole told the Senate Judiciary Committee on Wednesday.

Investigators are tackling an even bigger mountain of mortgage fraud cases in which hundreds of millions of dollars may have been swindled from the system, he told lawmakers.

Pistole says there are 530 active corporate fraud investigations, and 38 of them involve some of the biggest names in corporate finance in cases directly related to the current economic crisis. Additionally, the FBI has more than 1,800 mortgage fraud investigations, more than double the number of such cases just two years ago.

There are so many mortgage fraud cases to investigate, he said, that the bureau is not focusing on individual purchasers, but industry professionals generating fraud schemes that could total as much as hundreds of millions of dollars. "It is a matter of lawyers, brokers or real estate professionals that are systematically trying to defraud the system," Pistole said.

Agents have even seen some instances of organized crime getting involved in mortgage fraud, he said.

Also appearing before the committee was Neil Barofsky, the watchdog of the government's \$700 billion Wall Street rescue package passed last year.

Senate Democrats are urging more spending to expand the ranks of the FBI's financial fraud investigators.

After the 2001 terror attacks, about 2,000 FBI agents were moved to counterterrorism work, and Pistole said they are considering moving some of them back to buttress anti-fraud efforts.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., urged the FBI and the Justice Department to put people who have committed mortgage fraud behind bars. "Most people are honest," Leahy said. "The ones who are not honest in this field are creating economic havoc and I want to make sure that we're able to go after them. "I want to see people prosecuted . . . Frankly, I want to see them go to jail," he said.

Barofsky, who was appointed the inspector general of the ongoing financial bailout plan, suggested the best way to clean up mortgage fraud is to pursue licensed professionals in the industry, and make examples of them. "They have the most to lose, they're the most likely to flip, and they make the best examples," said Barofsky, a former federal prosecutor in New York.

HEART FOR WOMEN ACT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to share my thoughts as the lead cosponsor on the Heart for Women Act, introduced by Senator STABENOW and myself along with 21 original cosponsors. Heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases are critically important health issues that combined, are the No. 1 cause of death in all American women, taking the life of one female nearly every minute. The Heart for Women Act will decrease the burden of heart disease in women, which coupled with stroke will claim the lives of nearly half a million women in America in 2008; this is more than all deaths from breast, cervical, and lung cancers combined.

A new study shows that while in young men under age 45, the heart disease death rate is declining, the rate in young women has actually increased and is now at its highest level since 1987. We cannot idly sit back and allow more of us to become part of these statistics, so to address heart disease mortality and these significant disparities between men and women, Senator STABENOW and I have introduced The HEART for Women Act.

Our legislation, the HEART for Women Act, does three things: First, it provides the public with better information about safe and effective treatments for women by requiring drug safety information to be stratified by sex, race, and ethnicity. This information will help doctors, researchers, and patients better understand why certain treatments work better in men than in women. Second, this legislation expands the WISEWOMAN Program that provides free heart disease and stroke prevention screening to low-income, uninsured women. This program has been incredibly successful throughout the U.S. three out of four women screened by this program had at least one risk factor for heart disease and stroke. The HEART for Women Act also raises awareness among health care providers about the risk for heart disease and stroke. A 2004 survey found that less than 20 percent of physicians were aware that more women than men die each year from cardiovascular diseases.

After all this, there is some good news—a USA Today article from January 2008 points out that heart disease deaths rates fell among women by almost 27 percent between 1999 and 2005; however, researchers estimate that epidemics of diabetes and obesity could threaten these gains.

I encourage my colleagues to join us and support women's heart health. Passage of this legislation will ensure that providers have greater access to life-saving drugs and screening services to prevent the rise of cardiovascular disease in women.

PANETTA CONFIRMATION

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I support the confirmation of Leon Panetta to be Director of the CIA. His integrity and independence, his managerial skills, his broad experience in both the executive and legislative branches, and his testimony during his confirmation hearing suggest he is exactly the kind of CIA Director our country needs right now.

First, his statements, in his meeting with me and at his confirmation hearing, provide assurances that he will put CIA activities squarely within the law and refocus the brave and dedicated professionals of the Agency on what they do best, and on what we need them for the most. Not only did he express his commitment to ending an illegal and ineffective interrogation and detention program, but he clearly indi-

cated that the CIA would not conduct extraordinary renditions to secret detentions. Congressman Panetta also committed to ending the Bush administration's practice of using "Gang of Eight" briefings to evade its legal responsibility to brief the full congressional intelligence committees, thereby thwarting oversight. And he assured me that the CIA would cooperate with the Department of Justice as the Department reviews interrogation, detention, rendition and other matters that raise legal questions. These statements, along with his previous condemnations of torture and of warrantless surveillance of Americans, suggest a personal commitment to the law and to our Constitution that will be needed as the CIA faces the challenges ahead.

I have long been concerned that intelligence resources have not been sufficiently allocated toward long-term and emerging threats in places like Africa, and was pleased that Congressman Panetta testified that he shares these concerns. More importantly, he has committed to conducting a review of CIA operations and resources in light of these concerns and to working closely with the committee in the course of that review. Finally, he testified that he agrees with the goal of developing strategies that integrate clandestine collection with the information obtained openly by our government, particularly through diplomatic collection. Last year, the Senate Intelligence Committee passed legislation creating an independent Commission to make recommendations on how to achieve this integration and Congressman Panetta has committed to working with me on that legislation. These commitments give me confidence that Congressman Panetta will work to refocus the CIA on its central mission of protecting our national security.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering well over 1,200, are heartbreaking and touching. While energy prices have dropped in recent weeks, the concerns expressed remain very relevant. To respect the efforts of those who took the opportunity to share their thoughts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through an address set up specifically for this purpose to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

I am a working class American male, fighting to maintain a standard of living which will enable me to provide for myself and my family. I find it difficult to imagine why we would continue as a country to be held host to foreign oil.

I find that prices of everything are rising because of the cost of shipping, and some members of Congress I hear think this is a good thing? Sir, I am pleased that you would want to hear from us, but realistically I am less than convinced that much will be done by a body of people who seem so unwilling and unable to work together as the current Congress appears.

I used to be optimistic that one voice could make a difference and now have resigned myself to believe that by and large those who sit in the "hallowed halls of Congress" care only for their power and position and nothing for us as citizens. The price of groceries continues to rise, the price of fuel driving everything higher, shippers cannot afford to transport goods, and I find the future bleak. How long before the trucking industry, the shipping industry, railways and airlines stop because no one can afford to pay the cost?

Foodstuffs such as corn are now being grown for fuel, driving those prices higher and yet no relief is felt at the pump. It seems clear to me that two things must happen; first we must become energy independent, drilling within our own borders, and second finding alternative forms of energy to prevent this from happening. Please use whatever powers of persuasion you possess to convince your fellow Senators to listen and feel the crunch that is crippling our nation!

ALBERT.

My wife and I were born in Idaho (I in Kellogg and my wife in Pocatello) and I work at the INL although I am currently on assignment at the Yucca Mountain Project.

How Do Gas Prices Impact Us and the Nation

I am 67 and my wife is 63 and, with the high cost of gas, we are afraid to retire. These were supposed to be the "golden years" and they are far from that. It is driving up the cost of food and other items that must be shipped by truck and is killing the auto industry. Because of all of these cost increases and the uncertainties it is creating in our economy, the stock market is also dropping and pulling down what retirement investments that we have. Although health care and other issues are also on our mind, I fear that high gas prices are dragging our country to its knees and it is spreading in all directions. They use to say that if we lost Vietnam, it would have the domino effect and we would lose all of that part of Asia.

Well, high gas prices are definitely causing a domino effect, and as people travel less it impacts everyone who support the travel industry. Look what it is doing to the airline industry. The impact of high gas prices is spreading everywhere. I wonder how long it will take to get beyond this mess. Should I plan to retire at 70 or maybe I should think about 75?

WHAT TO DO ABOUT GAS PRICES

The country is now looking toward nuclear power and that is great. Wind and solar power might help a little, but they cannot produce enough. And drilling for more oil in new locations could also help. But these are all long-term solutions that cannot help today. I think what makes us frustrated is that the oil companies are making record profits and they aren't doing anything to help the country. It is sort of like their atti-

tude is to take the money and run. So if you want to do something in the short term, you need to deal with them now. Congress needs to look into how much they pay their CEOs and put a cap on that amount. When a CEO makes 100 or 1,000 times more than the President or you, Mike as a Senator, something is wrong. Congress also needs to look into what they are doing with these record profits. They claim that they are doing more exploration but we as the public cannot see this. They should be forced to make public what they are doing with the profits. I do not see them building any new refineries. They should be forced to do that. But you see, why would they want to build new refineries when they have created a shortage that makes money for them. We are asking the Saudis to pump more oil but we do not ask our own oil companies to build more refineries. Congress needs to "get into their rice bowl" as they. And if the oil companies do not want to be part of this, Congress should tax their profits beyond a certain point and use the money to supplement gas prices. In the past during times of war, Congress has created excess profit taxes to take the profit out of war and they should do that now. We are in a domestic war and it is killing our country. Or Congress should look at their profits and set gas prices for them. Set regular gas, for example, at \$3.00 per gallon and the next year if their profits are still beyond reason, drop it down to \$2.50 per gallon.

Thanks for working on this issue Mike. My wife and I are worried for our country. We do not know where all of this is going, but it does not look good.

JIM.

We, as a Nation, have been irresponsible in allowing ourselves to be dependent upon foreign sources for our energy needs. And now, we are all paying the painful price. It is ignorant to believe that we can just purchase all our energy from other countries and in doing so, save the environment. We have some of the strictest standards in place in the United States to prevent damage to the environment, and yet we allow other countries without those standards to pollute the environment in the production of our energy. This is burying our heads in the sand.

We have vastly improved our technologies since the early 1980s when the bans on offshore drilling were put into effect. We would not expect to see the same problems we had in the past if we were to resume that drilling today. We also need to address the fact that we have not built any new refineries in this country, and that is a necessary piece to our energy needs puzzle. We have vast resources of oil reserves that are untouched, mostly due to the cries of the environmentalists, who are using their hearts instead of their minds to raise their objections.

I have a dear friend who is an independent trucker out of Pennsylvania, who has been doing a long-haul run from there to the Northwest for over 10 years now. He has been watching his profits be reduced by thousands of dollars per run, a reduction that he is not able to simply pass along. After almost 25 years of trucking, he is now contemplating something else for the future. What will we, as a nation, do if enough of our truckers quit due to the rising fuel costs? We do not have enough alternatives in place to move our goods, and without moving our goods, our economy will collapse. We, individually, understand the impact on our family budgets for energy increases, but we have not yet begun to feel the entire impact that will trickle down to our level.

We need to develop our own energy. We need to allow more drilling. We need to allow refineries to be built. We need to allow nuclear power plants to be built. We need to de-

velop such things as wind energy and tap waste sources such as landfills for methane gas. We need permanent tax incentives for the installation and use of renewables such as solar and wind. We need to develop a usable hydrogen power. And that should just be the start.

Yes, the increase in fuel has cost me and is hampering my lifestyle. But I fear that, if the current prices become permanent, then the costs to me will be so much greater than they are today, and that is unacceptable.

Thank you for your time in reading this.

MONICA.

In September 2007 my husband changed jobs due to a long commute and high gas prices. He had been travelling from Weston, Idaho, to Promontory, Utah (132 miles round trip), and had done so for the last sixteen years. In September, he took a new job in Logan, Utah, which was half the commute. However, in the exchange, he also took a \$4.50/hr cut in pay. We were okay because of the shorter commute and we were saving in gas. Now, with the higher, much higher fuel prices, we not only have lost the fuel savings but still have the cut in wages. It is getting very difficult to make ends meet. High fuel costs are affecting every aspect of our lives—food, utilities, etc. We are supportive of drilling America's own oil so we are not reliant on outside sources. Speed limits could also be reduced and enforced. We drive small fuel-efficient vehicles, unlike many who are driving large trucks and SUVs. Americans need to wake up. Farmers in our area are really struggling. Fuel prices are making it very difficult to plant and harvest crops. We just need some relief. We appreciate your asking our input and support your efforts in getting the people of Idaho and America some relief.

RICHARD AND CHRISTY, *Weston*.

We need to start drilling now.

I am an Idaho resident and, because of work, commute weekly from Idaho to Washington. The fuel costs are affecting me by not only personal use of my cars but also air fare and food for my farm animals and us.

There is so much oil out there in the US, i.e., shale oil, oil from coal, onshore and offshore oil. Until the new technology comes out for autos and electrical energy we need to use the fuel that we have instead of punishing the people of this country—by listening to the eco terror people, green peace and the others. They are the ones that created the problem plus the new socialist democrats. Who are taking our freedoms away? Oh, one more thing the man caused global warming is a fraud it is natural climate changes. Look at the past.

THOMAS.

I do not have much to say but this. I work as a restaurant manager and I see firsthand the domino effect of the energy/gas crisis. Restaurants are the first to view the troubled economy. Our sales are down, not saying how much. Food cost is rising. People are not coming out to eat. My Team Members are getting hours cut and not making enough money to even survive, let alone put gas in their tanks. My staff is the first hit by any economy issue and our sales have dropped drastically. My restaurant and its staff members who are in a crisis state. Someone needs to do something.

BRANDY, *Boise*.

To Whom It May Concern:

I ride my bike almost everywhere I go so my gas price is \$0/gallon. Also, my pollution impact is minimal as is my road impact, and my health is excellent.

MIKE, *Boise*.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this critical input. I am employed as an Environmental Engineer at the Idaho National Laboratory—Materials Fuels Complex—a nuclear fuels research facility.

Impacts—to name a few:

Greatly reduced discretionary travel and spending

Marked increase in cost of food and consumables

Recent need to reduce percentage of income saved for retirement and college tuition for our children.

Huge increase in cost associated with heating home (Rocky Mountain Power) and irrigate my property.

Enormous cost increase in corn feed and fertilizer

Inability to afford herbicides necessary to combat noxious weeds on property

Decreased property values of vacation home in Island Park Idaho—given drastically reduced numbers of vacation visitors to Fremont Co. since gas and diesel have gone sky high.

The high fuel costs have created an atmosphere in virtually all commodities that the producer can falsely claim that their higher prices charged are merely a result of higher energy costs.

Suggested Actions:

Build infrastructure in U.S.—new, strategically located refineries,—this is not just a crude oil problem, and our refineries are antiquated.

Provide incentives to oil and gas companies to expand exploration—lower their corporate tax.

Prohibit reinstatement of wind+fall profits taxes.

Eliminate overly burdensome environmental/permitting hurdles for petroleum exploration, siting and operation of oil refineries, extraction/processing of oil shale, oils sands, etc.

Target drastically higher dollars for University research of petroleum exploration, extraction, and refining technologies.

DEVELOP ANWR AND ALL OFFSHORE RESOURCES

Develop natural gas distribution infrastructure—to gain access to the huge natural gas reserves in North America.

Never sign up to the Law of the Sea Treaty.

Reject Cap and Trade.

Sign on to No global warming (hoax) treaties or initiatives.

Play economic hardball with China and India, whom subsidize their citizens' use of petroleum products.

Firmly commandeer Iraq's oil reserves as partial compensation for the loss of life and financial burden of the Iraq war.

Thank you for the opportunity. P.S.—the U.S. is not too dependent upon fossil fuels; we are not using what we have on U.S. and adjacent soil wisely, or at all.

PAUL, *Idaho Falls.*

I really appreciate your efforts to help out the public. I work as a receptionist at St Alphonsus. Many patients are canceling their appointments primarily because they cannot afford to drive, even if it is 5 miles away. The public is not happy because of the gas prices.

My fiancé and I just moved closer to where I work. If we did not I would not be able to afford the gas to come to work. The rising gas prices are making the gap bigger between the rich and the poor. Something does need to be done quickly. The greed needs to come to an end and the government is the only force here in the United States big enough to help out the public.

Thanks for understanding,

MEGAN, *Boise*

Years ago I was pleased to be able to wait on your wife as she drove thru the MPCU teller window in Idaho Falls. With her in the Suburban were a passel of kids. Now I also have a few children, and these days with energy costs skyrocketing beyond the means of many families I think it is important to speak up. I think twice every time I drive my van because of the costs. We normally visit my family in Idaho Falls four times per year and this year will only be able to reasonably afford two times, and a major component of that decision is the cost of fuel. My husband is an engineer and drives approximately 20 miles round trip to work every day. He and another co worker commute to save fuel. We have not had as much disposable income as heating, cooling and fuel prices have climbed at an astonishing pace. We have stopped eating as much meat because of the cost of it. I water down the milk to make it go further. We fortunately live far below our means, but many families are not as fortunate as we are. One of my dear friends works in 30 miles away, and drives there from Moscow every day. With a long daily commute, and with higher prices looming on the horizon who knows what this winter will bring. She said that if it goes up much more she will not make enough money to justify the driving.

I am not asking for the government to fix this. The American people are resilient, and the government's micromanagement of energy opportunities has only led us to higher prices. You can bet if the oil companies are penalized for their comparatively tiny per gallon profit, prices will continue to climb.

What I propose is for government to get out of the way. Pave the road to energy independence with reduced regulation and open opportunity for exploration of all energy sources. We should pursue coal to oil, nuclear, wind, methane, natural gas and every other type of fuel, with the goal of being energy independent. If the government will just be reasonable, we could do all these things. I appreciate your service, and your request for stories. Thank you for remembering that you are there in our place, remind the others that they are too.

EMILY, *Moscow.*

First I must say that I am a retired federal employee with 34 years of service. As you know living on a fixed income is not easy at best, but with the cost of gas going up that is affecting EVERYTHING. I have cut back on all non essential driving—even to travel 50 miles to see my elderly parents (80 & 78) once a week to help them out. I have cut back on how often I mow the lawn to once every 2 weeks. I do not own any recreation toys such as campers, 4-wheelers, boats or motorcycles so cannot cut any RV usages. There will be very limited vacation trips this summer. . . . Maybe to take my grandsons camping.

I can remember back prior to the 70's gas scare when the government had more controls on the oil companies and gas was much more reasonable and there was still exploration being done by the oil companies. Now without controls these companies are having record net profits (enough to lower the cost of gas close to \$1.00 a gallon), why is this happening? Also the stock market futures on oil dictate price increases before the crude is even bought, but the drops in crude never seem to get passed on to consumers at the same rate as the increases . . . again why is this?

There was a march protesting the petroleum prices here in Lewiston a couple of weeks ago . . . what else can the people do to get thru to our government?

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my frustrations.

Sincerely,

BOB.

We must do all we can to mitigate the energy crisis gripping this nation. We can and must become energy independent on natural gas in America. We have the resources here to achieve this. Start drilling. Prices are on track to double by this winter. However, the brutal truth is that the neo-American Bolshevik socialist left in this country will tie this nation up in the courts for years to prevent this and force their agenda on this nation. They are arrogantly smug about their ability to control us now. And well they should be. They have been trained by some of the finest Marxist professors anywhere in the world today, right here in the USA. In the end, our epitaph will read that we destroyed ourselves with the very freedoms that made us the envy of the free world. May almighty God forgive us for what we have allowed to happen to this grand experiment in human freedom.

RANDY.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING WILLIAM H. "MO" MARUMOTO

● Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I wish to express my deepest condolences and warmest aloha to the family and friends of William H. "Mo" Marumoto, who passed away last November.

Mr. Marumoto was an inspiration to all of those who came in contact with him. Those who knew him well knew of his selflessness and commitment to the public good.

During World War II, Mr. Marumoto and his family spent 3 years in the Gila River internment camp in Arizona. This experience did little to deter Mr. Marumoto's pursuit of excellence and service to his country. He served as student body president of his high school, Santa Ana High School, and later graduated from Whittier College.

His remarkable career spanned over five decades. He arrived in Washington, DC, in 1969 to serve as assistant to the secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, responsible for recruiting senior executives for the Office of Education. A year later, Mr. Marumoto became the first Asian American to serve at the executive level in the White House as an aide to President Richard Nixon responsible for filling Cabinet and sub-Cabinet level positions.

In 1973, he founded The Interface Group Ltd., a Washington, DC-based executive search firm which specialized in placing women and minorities in senior executive positions. He is fondly remembered for his efforts to ensure diversity within the most senior levels of government.

He was a remarkable leader as president and CEO of the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies and received numerous national professional awards for his work in higher education, fundraising, direct mail, events management, and publications.

My thoughts and prayers go out to Mo's loved ones. He will be deeply