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**Governor Crist, Attorney General McCollum, and Chief Financial Officer Sink
Warn Floridians to Be Aware of Foreclosure Scams**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Florida’s top officials are urging citizens to become more knowledgeable about foreclosure scams through housing forums such as the one hosted by Florida A&M University (FAMU) and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) on Thursday, November 12, 2009.

Florida Governor Charlie Crist, Attorney General Bill McCollum and Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink encourage homeowners and housing experts to attend the forum set for 10 a.m. at the FAMU College of Law, 201 Beggs Avenue in downtown Orlando. Free and open to the public, the forum will offer foreclosure prevention strategies for consumer advocate groups such as, but not limited to, housing counselors, military personnel that provide family support, community outreach organizations, consumer protection advocates, and financial advisors. For more information, please call 407-254-3206.

“Struggling families and homeowners facing the possibility of foreclosure should not have to worry about being cheated and preyed upon, especially by those seeking to profit from their misfortune,” Governor Crist said. “By learning about reliable foreclosure-rescue resources, Floridians can be empowered to work with their mortgage lenders and avoid the painful and devastating effects of fraud and scams.”

Chief Financial Officer Sink will speak during the forum. “We must do everything we can to ensure that struggling homeowners can get real help and keep a roof over their heads, as our state continues to have one of the highest foreclosure rates in the nation,” she said. “Florida’s homeowners are facing huge challenges and I will continue to highlight multiple ways they can get help -- either at one of our successful Housing Help workshops or with a volunteer attorney through the Florida Attorneys Saving Homes program.”

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FDIC-FAMU Foreclosure

Attorney General McCollum, whose office will be represented at the forum said, “Preying on people about to lose their homes and tricking them into believing that genuine help is being offered is cause for outrage. Foreclosure rescue fraud is a terrible epidemic, and the Attorney General’s Office is aggressively working to protect Florida’s homeowners.”

“FDIC in partnership with FAMU are joining together to alert and protect Florida residence from predators, who seek to rob distressed homeowners of their American dream,” said Thomas E. Stokes, III, FDIC community affairs officer for the Atlanta Region. “A homeowner in need of foreclosure assistance should be able to rely on legitimate counselors, to act as advocates and liaisons between mortgage servicers and the homeowner. These forums seek to bring together significant resources and leadership that can heighten public awareness and put a stop to those who would cash in on the distress of others. By stopping these predators, we allow homeowners to seek legitimate foreclosure prevention counseling.”

About FAMU:

Florida A&M University (FAMU) was founded on October 3, 1887. Today, FAMU is part of the State University System of Florida and has an enrollment of more than 12,000 students. FAMU is a four-year, public, co-educational institution and is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. FAMU offers 62 bachelor’s degrees and 39 master’s degrees. The university has 13 schools and colleges and one institute. The university also offers a juris doctor at its College of Law in Orlando. FAMU has 11 doctoral programs, which includes 10 Ph.D. programs.

About FAMU College of Law:

The FAMU College of Law was founded in 1949 on the main campus in Tallahassee. After graduating 57 lawyers, the law school was closed by the state of Florida in 1968. The Florida Legislature voted to reopen the law school in 2000 and Orlando was selected as the location. The reestablished FAMU College of Law opened its doors in 2002 and is now housed in a state-of-the-art facility in downtown Orlando’s Parramore neighborhood. The FAMU College of Law received full accreditation from the American Bar Association in July 2009.

About FDIC:

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) is an independent agency created by congress to maintain stability and public confidence in the nation’s financial system by insuring deposits, examining and supervising financial institutions for safety and soundness and consumer protection and managing receivership. The FDIC is a recognized leader in promoting sound public policies, addressing risks in the nation's financial system, and carrying out its insurance, supervisory, consumer protection, and receivership management responsibilities.

Congress created the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation in 1933 to restore public confidence in the nation’s banking system. The FDIC insures deposits at the nation’s 9,538 banks and savings associations and it promotes the safety and soundness of these institutions by identifying, monitoring and addressing risks to which they are exposed. The FDIC receives no federal tax dollars – insured financial institutions fund its operations.