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**NORTH SUBURBAN ACCOUNTANT ACCUSED OF DEFRAUDING
CLIENTS AND AREA BANK OF MORE THAN \$2 MILLION**

CHICAGO — A north suburban certified public accountant and tax preparer was indicted on federal charges for allegedly engaging in schemes to defraud US Bankcorp and five of his clients of more than \$2 million. The defendant, **Jeffrey B. Travis**, was charged with five counts of bank fraud and three counts of mail fraud in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury yesterday, Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced today.

Travis, 50, of Vernon Hills, who does business as Gross & Travis, Ltd., and Travis and Associates, Inc., with offices in Deerfield, allegedly engaged in the schemes from at least May 2002 until January 2009. The indictment charges that Travis prepared checks payable from his clients to vendors, retirement programs, and tax authorities, and instead of delivering them to the payees intended by his clients, he deposited at least 668 such checks without authority into accounts he controlled at US Bank – at times altering the checks to increase the amounts paid. Travis then withdrew the money from those accounts and diverted the funds to his own use.

The indictment seeks forfeiture of \$2,034,848, representing proceeds of the alleged fraud schemes.

The government is being represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney John F. Podliska.

Each count of bank fraud carries a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison and a \$1 million fine, and each mail fraud count carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine, and restitution is mandatory. The Court may also impose a fine totaling twice the loss to any victim or twice the gain to the defendant, whichever is greater. If convicted, the Court must impose a reasonable sentence under federal statutes and the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The investigation falls under the umbrella of the Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force, which includes representatives from a broad range of federal agencies, regulatory authorities, inspectors general, and state and local law enforcement who, working together, bring to bear a powerful array of criminal and civil enforcement resources. The task force is working to improve efforts across the federal executive branch, and with state and local partners, to investigate and prosecute significant financial crimes, ensure just and effective punishment for those who perpetrate financial crimes, combat discrimination in the lending and financial markets, and recover proceeds for victims of financial crimes. For more information on the task force, visit: www.StopFraud.gov

An indictment contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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