LAW & JUSTICE

NAACP says Blacks Steered to Bad Loans

Lawsuit targets lenders

(AP) — The NAACP is accusing Wells Fargo and HSBC of forcing blacks into subprime mortgages while whites with identical qualifications got lower rates.

Class-action lawsuits were filed against the banks March 13 in federal court in Los Angeles.

The NAACP is seeking ency in the loan process, educational outreach and internal training.

"It is time for these lenders to be held accountable," said NAACP President Beniamin Todd Jealous, "We look



Benjamin Todd Jealous reforms from the banks forward to forcing real such as increased transpar- change and real relief through this lawsuit."

> Black homebuyers have been 3 1/2 times more likely to receive a subprime loan than white borrowers, and six times more likely to get a president of corporate com- Amara Weaver of Milwausubprime rate when refinanc- munications for Wells Fargo kee, said she was one of the

ing, said Austin Tighe, co- & Co., called the lawsuit "to- victims of predatory lending. rights organization.

Tighe said African-Ameri- federal bailout funds. cans still were disproportion-

lead counsel for the civil tally unfounded and reck-

less." The bank is receiving "We have never tolerated,"

It is time for these lenders to be held accountable. We look forward to forcing real change

lawsuit. - Benjamin Todd Jealous, NAACP President

and real relief through this

ately steered into subprime and will never tolerate, disloans when their credit crimination in any way, shape scores, income and down or form in any of our busipayment were equal to those ness practices, products, or of white homebuyers. services," Murray said.

Melissa Murray, vice An NAACP member,

She bought her first home in 1984, receiving a 6.25 percent fixed-rate mortgage. She says she had a steady job as a human resources director for a social services agency, never missed a mortgage payment and maintained excellent credit.

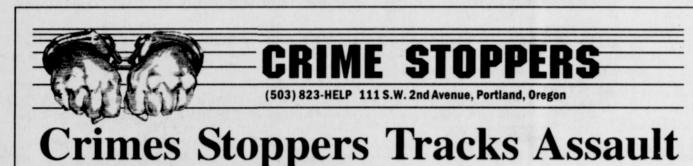
In 2004, she wanted to buy the house next door for her son to live in. She said the bank promised her a low fixed rate for a \$40,000 loan, but at the closing, when reading the fine print, she noticed that the rate was actually 11 percent.

Weaver, an NAACP member. "I didn't have any choice (but to sign). ... It made me feel violated."

Similar NAACP lawsuits are pending against a dozen other subprime lenders.

"This is systematic, institutionalized racism," Tighe said. "Once you take out factors relative to income and credit risk, the only difference between the borrowers is the color of their skin."

Tighe estimated that "tens of thousands" of blacks had been forced into bad loans, but said it was difficult to gauge the scope of the problem because banks keep much of their internal data private. The lawsuits could force banks to divulge "I was blown away," said closely guarded information, such as how banks can determine the race of a loan applicant and how federal bailout funds are being spent.



Stoppers are asking for the arm. public's help in identifying a woman accused of beating another woman at a New Year's Eve party.

On Jan. 1 at about 1:30 a.m., the 27-year-old victim was dancing at the City Sports Bar, 424 S.W. Fourth Ave., when the woman smashed her in the face with a glass and began beating her, police said. The appeared at the club. assault opened a cut on the victim's face requiring 37 a cash reward of up to \$1,000 stitches to close.

Investigators believe the Crime Stoppers, that leads to suspect was with a group of an arrest in this case, or any at least three other women. unsolved felony, and you re-She is described as a black main anonymous. Call Crime female in her 20s, medium Stoppers at 503-823-HELP build, 5 feet two inches, wear- (4357) or leave a tip online at ing long curls. She might have crimestoppersoforegon.com.

Portland Police and Crime a tattoo on her right upper

The suspect may have been assisted by another black female in her 20s who is about 4 feet six inches with a heavy build, and straight black hair. Police released a photo of the suspect and her companion, who may have been involved or simply witnessed the assault, showing them as they

Crime Stoppers is offering for information, reported to Spring Break Scam Warning

John Kroger is warning par- their scam seem more legitients about scams that involve bogus stories about kids on Spring Break getting into car accidents, plane crashes or going to jail after police break up a wild party.

Con artists call in the middle of the night and tell parents that children on Spring Break have been hospitalized or jailed. Confused and worried parents are told to wire money to a "friend" to pay for medical help or bail.

Oregon Attorney General nipulate caller ID to make mate.

> Parents are told they must immediately find a 24-hour money transfer service. By the time parents realize they have been scammed, the money and the scammers are gone.

Kroger says parents should pre-arrange ways to easily communicate with their children while on Spring Break either by cell phone or through trusted adults or The scammers can ma- friends on the same trip.

Platinum Fade



A photo provided by police shows a woman (left) accused of assaulting another woman at a New Year's Eve party, downtown. Police said her companion (right) may have been involved or simply witnessed the assault.

Prison Alternatives Cut Crime and Costs

data for the 50 states shows that strong community supervision programs not only incarceration but when appropriately resourced and nity. managed can cut recidivism.

spending by reallocating offenders. criminal justice system expenses to fund stronger su- egon, for every dollar the held accountable in the comcost significantly less than pervision of the large number state spent on prisons in munity at far lower cost," said of offenders in the commu- 2008, the state spent 27 cents Adam Gelb, director of the

Diverting the offenders to

A new national report with states can cut both crime and beds needed to house violent search shows that prisons are

on probation and parole.

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housing too many people who The study found that, in Or- can be managed safely and Pew Center on the States' "Violent and career crimi- Public Safety Performance community supervision pro- nals need to be locked up, and Project, which produced the



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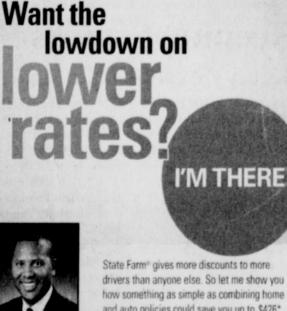
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