



NEWS RELEASE

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FDIC SUSPENDS MONTANA BANKER GORDON H. OCHENRIDER

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation announced today that it has suspended Gordon H. Ochenrider from his positions with two Montana banks and has banned him from participating in the affairs of all other FDIC-insured financial institutions and related organizations.

The decision by the FDIC Board follows Ochenrider's indictment in January on criminal offenses involving numerous allegations of dishonesty and breach of trust. Ochenrider was indicted in the U.S. District Court in Missoula, Montana, on charges that include accepting a bribe as a bank officer and director of Mountain Bank in Whitefish, Montana; scheming to defraud Mountain Bank; engaging in drug money laundering; and participating in a racketeering conspiracy.

Recent examination information indicates that Ochenrider has been receiving compensation from the banks, including the payment of legal fees. The decision announced today prevents Ochenrider from receiving compensation or legal fees from the banks in connection with the FDIC's action or his pending criminal proceeding.

Ochenrider has served as executive vice president and a director of Mountain Bank, as well as president and a director of Valley Bank of Belgrade in Belgrade, Montana. The two banks are affiliated.

Given the serious nature of the alleged offenses, the FDIC Board of Directors has determined that continued participation by Ochenrider poses a threat to the interests of the banks' depositors and could impair public confidence in the banks.

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FDIC rules authorize suspension and prohibition proceedings when charges against an individual for a crime involving dishonesty or breach of trust are punishable by imprisonment exceeding one year. Ochenrider can request a hearing and a reconsideration of the FDIC's decision. If a court finds Ochenrider innocent of the charges or otherwise dismisses the case against him, the FDIC's order will be removed.

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