Terms Completed

ORDER SUMMARY – Case Number: C-07-114

Name(s):	Sylvester Abraham Reesves, Jr.			
Order Number:	C-07-114-07-FO01			
Effective Date :	March 21, 2008			
License Number: Or NMLS Identifier [U/L] License Effect:	DFI: 37442 [NMLS: 243894] (Revoked, suspended, stayed, application denied or withdrawn) If applicable, you must specifically note the ending dates of terms. None			
Not Apply Until:	April 3, 2008			
Not Eligible Until:	_			
Prohibition/Ban Until:				
Investigation Costs	\$	Due	Paid N	Date
Fine	\$	Due	Paid N	Date
Assessment(s)	\$	Due	Paid N N	Date
Restitution	\$	Due	Paid Y N	Date
Judgment	\$	Due	Paid Y N	Date
Satisfaction of Judgment I		□ Y □ N		
	No. of Victims:			
Comments:				



State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

In The Matter of Investigating the Loan Originator License Application under the Mortgage Broker Practices Act 0f Washington by:

SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR.,

OAH Docket No. 2007-DFI-0010

DFI No. C-07-114-07-FO01

AMENDED FINAL DECISION AND ORDER

Respondent.

THIS MATTER having come before SCOTT JARVIS, Director of the Washington State Department of Financial Institutions (hereinafter, "Department"), sitting as Presiding Officer, on the Department's Petition for Review (hereinafter, "Department's Petition") dated August 2, 2007, from the Initial Decision and Order (hereinafter, "Initial Order") dated July 13, 2007, of Administrative Law Judge Brian O. Watkins of the Office of Administrative Hearings (hereinafter, "ALJ"); and the Presiding Officer having fully considered the entire record on review, including, without limitation, all pleadings, testimony and recorded oral and written argument before the ALJ, together with the Initial Order, the Department's Petition, the Respondent's Response to the Department's Petition (hereinafter, "Respondent's Response"), and the Department's Reply to Respondent's Petition (hereinafter, "Department's Reply");

NOW, THEREFORE, the Presiding Officer issues the following Final Decision and Order:

1.0 CONSIDERATION

1.1 Notwithstanding Paragraph 1.1 of the Final Decision and Order dated March 18, 2008 (hereinafter, "Superseded Order"), the Presiding Officer now finds and confirms that the Department's Petition was filed and served upon the Department within twenty (20) days from date of service of the Initial Order, or August 2, 2007. Therefore, the Presiding Officer finds

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and confirms that the Department's Petition is <u>timely</u> and that the Department's Petition, the Respondent's Response and the Department's Reply must be considered.

- 1.2 In addition, the Presiding Officer has the authority and duty to consider whether the Initial Order was appropriate based upon the entire record on review, independent of any consideration of the Department's Petition, the Respondent's Response and the Department's Reply must be considered.
- 1.3 The Presiding Officer agrees with and concurs in the Findings of Fact contained in the Initial Order, with the *exception* of the following:
 - 1.3.1 Finding of Fact No. 13 is hereby modified as follows:

"On December 27, 2000, the Pierce County Prosecutor filed an information, charging the Appellant with four felonies: (1) Possessing Stolen Property in the First Degree in violation of RCW 9A.56.140(1); (2) One count of False Statements or illegal transfers in violation of RCW 46.12.210; (3) Another count of False Statements or illegal transfers in violation of RCW 46.12.210; and (4) Identity Theft in violation of RCW 9.35.020. The amended information did not contain the word *felony* or *feloniously*."

1.3.2 Finding of Fact No. 19 is hereby modified as follows:

"I must consider carefully the evidence regarding whether the Appellant knew or had reason to know that he had ever been charged with a felony. evaluating the evidence, I considered the demeanor and motivations of the witnesses and the logical persuasiveness of the parties' positions. In entering findings, I need not be persuaded beyond a reasonable doubt as to the true state of affairs, nor must the persuasive evidence be clear, cogent, and convincing. I need only determine what most likely happened. A preponderance of the evidence is that evidence which, when fairly considered, produces the strongest impression, has the greater weight, and is more convincing as to its truth when weighed against the evidence in opposition to it. Yamamoto v. Puget Sound Lumber Co., 84 Wn. 411, 417, 146 P. 861 (1915). Significant at the hearing were the Appellant's testimony and the criminal court pleadings. Either no one informed Appellant that he had ever been charged with a felony or he only had a recollection of the amended information, which did not mention the word felony or feloniously. The uncontroverted testimony of Appellant is that he had an appreciation only that he had been charged with a misdemeanor and that he relied upon his defense attorney, who told him so. He was unsophisticated, had no legal training, and had no other criminal charges. I find by the preponderance of the evidence that the Appellant was not aware that he was charged with a felony until the Department served him with the statement of charges in this matter. I also find the Appellant's lack of knowledge and application responses are reasonable under the circumstances."

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After careful review of the record and with proper deference to the ALJ (who 1.4 heard the live testimony of Respondent with respect to his demeanor and perceived credibility as a witness), the Presiding Officer hereby declines to modify Finding of Fact No. 20 of the Initial Order.

- The Presiding Officer agrees with and concurs in the Conclusions of Law 1.5 contained in the Initial Order, with the exception of the following:
 - Conclusion of Law No. 14 is hereby modified as follows: 1.5.1

"A preponderance of the evidence in this case indicates that under the circumstances, including confusion between the original criminal information and the amended criminal information and the nature of the criminal charges as explained by his defense attorney, the Appellant made a reasonable effort to be forthcoming in disclosing the nature of his criminal He visited the Department to discuss it, disclosed his conviction. conviction, charges and plea to the best of his knowledge and made it known in his application that he would come in to the Department's offices to discuss what he believed were the facts. Under the peculiar circumstances presented, and in the absence of credible testimony or timely argument to the contrary, the Presiding Officer concludes that the Department has not met its burden of demonstrating 'negligence' by a preponderance of the evidence."

Conclusion of Law No. 16 is hereby modified as follows:

"The sole remaining issue is whether the Appellant negligently made a false statement of material fact when he informed the Department that 'In December 2000 i [sic] plead guilty' rather than listing the actual month of his plea, which was April 2001, a difference of four months. His statement in this regard was indeed a mistake. It is also true that, while the Department later examined the Appellant's criminal background and discovered the mistake, the Department is entitled to consider the truthfulness and veracity of an applicant on his or her application when determining his or her honesty and suitability for a loan originator license. However, the Presiding Officer cannot conclude that such a mistake is always material and always the product of negligence. Presiding Officer concludes that because this case presents enough mitigating circumstances, as shown by the Findings of Fact and as reflected in Conclusion of Law No. 14, the Department has failed to demonstrate its burden of proof of 'negligence' by a preponderance of the evidence."

Conclusion of Law No. 17 is hereby modified as follows: 1.5.3

 "Accordingly, the Appellant did not negligently make any false statement or knowingly and willfully make any omission of material fact in connection with his application. Appellant therefore should not be barred from working in the mortgage industry in any capacity whatsoever for a period of five years."

1.6 The Presiding Officer further generally concurs with the ALJ, as the latter articulated in Conclusion of Law No. 18 of the Initial Order, that administrative law judges lack authority to invalidate legislation and agency regulations. For the same reason, this Presiding Officer lacks authority to officially consider the constitutionality of laws enacted by the Legislature with the express requirement that they be administered by the Department, or to invalidate prior rulemaking without complying with the rulemaking requirements of Chapter 34.05 RCW. Accordingly, the Presiding Officer must decline to consider assertions of unconstitutionality raised by Respondent at trial and in Respondent's Response. See <u>Bare v. Gorton</u>, 84 Wn.2d 380, 383 (1974), citing <u>United States v. Kissinger</u>, 250 F.2d 940 (3d Cir. 1958); cert. denied, 356 U.S. 958 (1958). 3 K. Davis, <u>Administrative Law Treatise</u>, § 20.04, at p. 74 (1958); see also <u>Johnson v. Robison</u>, 415 U.S. 361, 368 (1974), quoting <u>Oestereich v. Selective Serv. System Local Bd. No. 11</u>, 393 U.S. 233, 242 (1968); accord, <u>Califano v. Sanders</u>, 430 U.S. 99, 109 (1977).

2.0 FINAL DECISION AND ORDER

For all of the reasons set forth above, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

- 2.1 The Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law as set forth in the Initial Order are confirmed except as set forth above in Subsections 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5, inclusive.
- 2.2 Pursuant to RCW 19.146.310, the application of SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR., for a loan originator's license with the Department of Financial Institutions is DENIED, and the Department has authority to and shall deny any loan originator's application he files up to and including APRIL 3, 2008.
- 2.3 SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR. may not work as a loan originator in Washington unless the Department licenses him to do so after a future license application made after April 3, 2008. Nothing in this Final Decision and Order shall prohibit SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR. from working in a capacity for a licensed mortgage broker that does not require a license with the Department.

While Respondent shall <u>not</u> after April 3, 2008 be automatically precluded under RCW 19.146.310 from obtaining a loan originator's license, nothing in this Final Decision and Order shall preclude the Department from evaluating, in any future application of SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR., his criminal conviction on April 3, 2001, as a basis for his fitness for a loan originator license, subject, however, to the requirements and limitations of Chapter 19.146 RCW and WAC 208-660.

DATED: March 21,2008



SCOTT JARVIS
Director & Presiding Officer

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State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

In The Matter of Investigating the Loan Originator License Application under the Mortgage Broker Practices Act 0f Washington by:

SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR.,

OAH Docket No. 2007-DFI-0010

DFI No. C-07-114-07-FO01

FINAL DECISION AND ORDER

Respondent.

THIS MATTER having come before SCOTT JARVIS, Director of the Washington State Department of Financial Institutions (hereinafter, "Department"), sitting as Presiding Officer, on the Department's Petition for Review (hereinafter, "Department's Petition") dated August 2, 2007, from the Initial Decision and Order (hereinafter, "Initial Order") dated July 13, 2007, of Administrative Law Judge Brian O. Watkins of the Office of Administrative Hearings (hereinafter, "ALJ"); and the Presiding Officer having fully considered the entire record on review, including, without limitation, all pleadings, testimony and recorded oral and written argument before the ALJ, together with the Initial Order, the Department's Petition, the Respondent's Response to the Department's Petition (hereinafter, "Respondent's Response"), and the Department's Reply to Respondent's Petition (hereinafter, "Department's Reply");

NOW, THEREFORE, the Presiding Officer issues the following Final Decision and Order:

1.0 CONSIDERATION

The Initial Order contained a Notice of Further Appeal Rights, which clearly stated that 1.1 "[t]the deadline to file a Petition for Review is August 2, 2007." There is a Certificate of Service appended to the Initial Order clearly showing that the Initial Order was served by mail upon the Department and its counsel of Record, Chad C. Standifer, Assistant Attorney General, on the same date of its entry, July 13, 2007. Moreover, the Department's file shows that the

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33 34 Department actually received the Initial Order as of July 16, 2007. Pursuant to RCW 34.05.464 and WAC 10-08-211, the Department had twenty (20) days from date of service of the Initial Order, or August 2, 2007, to file a petition for review (Department's Petition). Pursuant to WAC 10-08-110(1)(a), filing of petitions for review with an agency are deemed *filed* as of the date and time of actual filing. Therefore, it appearing that Department's Petition, while dated August 2, 2007, was not actually filed until August 6, 2007, the Presiding Officer has no choice but to conclude that it was *untimely* and must not consider it.

- 1.2 There being no timely petition for review, the Presiding Officer still has the authority and duty to consider whether the Initial Order was appropriate based upon the entire record on review, excluding Department's Petition.
- 1.3 The Presiding Officer agrees with and concurs in the Findings of Fact contained in the Initial Order, with the *exception* of the following:
 - 1.3.1 Finding of Fact No. 13 is hereby modified as follows:

"On December 27, 2000, the Pierce County Prosecutor filed an information, charging the Appellant with four felonies: (1) Possessing Stolen Property in the First Degree in violation of RCW 9A.56.140(1); (2) One count of False Statements or illegal transfers in violation of RCW 46.12.210; (3) Another count of False Statements or illegal transfers in violation of RCW 46.12.210; and (4) Identity Theft in violation of RCW 9.35.020. The amended information did not contain the word *felony* or *feloniously*."

1.3.2 Finding of Fact No. 19 is hereby modified as follows:

"I must consider carefully the evidence regarding whether the Appellant knew or had reason to know that he had ever been charged with a felony. evaluating the evidence, I considered the demeanor and motivations of the witnesses and the logical persuasiveness of the parties' positions. In entering findings, I need not be persuaded beyond a reasonable doubt as to the true state of affairs, nor must the persuasive evidence be clear, cogent, and convincing. I need only determine what most likely happened. A preponderance of the evidence is that evidence which, when fairly considered, produces the strongest impression, has the greater weight, and is more convincing as to its truth when weighed against the evidence in opposition to it. Yamamoto v. Puget Sound Lumber Co., 84 Wn. 411, 417, 146 P. 861 (1915). Significant at the hearing were the Appellant's testimony and the criminal court pleadings. Either no one informed Appellant that he had ever been charged with a felony or he only had a recollection of the amended information, which did not mention the word felony or feloniously. The uncontroverted testimony of Appellant is that he had an appreciation only that he had been charged with a misdemeanor and that he relied upon his defense attorney, who told him so. He was unsophisticated, had

 no legal training, and had no other criminal charges. I find by the preponderance of the evidence that the Appellant was not aware that he was charged with a felony until the Department served him with the statement of charges in this matter. I also find the Appellant's lack of knowledge and application responses are reasonable under the circumstances."

- 1.4 After careful review of the record and with proper deference to the ALJ (who heard the live testimony of Respondent with respect to his demeanor and perceived credibility as a witness), and in the absence of a timely petition for review by the Department, the Presiding Officer hereby declines to modify Finding of Fact No. 20 of the Initial Order.
- 1.5 The Presiding Officer agrees with and concurs in the Conclusions of Law contained in the Initial Order, with the *exception* of the following:
 - 1.5.1 Conclusion of Law No. 14 is hereby modified as follows:
 - "A preponderance of the evidence in this case indicates that under the circumstances, including confusion between the original criminal information and the amended criminal information and the nature of the criminal charges as explained by his defense attorney, the Appellant made a reasonable effort to be forthcoming in disclosing the nature of his criminal conviction. He visited the Department to discuss it, disclosed his conviction, charges and plea to the best of his knowledge and made it known in his application that he would come in to the Department's offices to discuss what he believed were the facts. Under the peculiar circumstances presented, and in the absence of credible testimony or timely argument to the contrary, the Presiding Officer concludes that the Department has not met its burden of demonstrating 'negligence' by a preponderance of the evidence."
 - 1.5.2 Conclusion of Law No. 16 is hereby modified as follows:

"The sole remaining issue is whether the Appellant negligently made a false statement of material fact when he informed the Department that 'In December 2000 i [sic] plead guilty' rather than listing the actual month of his plea, which was April 2001, a difference of four months. His statement in this regard was indeed a mistake. It is also true that, while the Department later examined the Appellant's criminal background and discovered the mistake, the Department is entitled to consider the truthfulness and veracity of an applicant on his or her application when determining his or her honesty and suitability for a loan originator license. However, the Presiding Officer cannot conclude that such a mistake is always material and always the product of negligence. Rather, the Presiding Officer concludes that because this case presents enough

mitigating circumstances, as shown by the Findings of Fact and as reflected in Conclusion of Law No. 14, the Department has failed to demonstrate its burden of proof of 'negligence' by a preponderance of the evidence."

1.5.3 Conclusion of Law No. 17 is hereby modified as follows:

"Accordingly, the Appellant did not negligently make any false statement or knowingly and willfully make any omission of material fact in connection with his application. Appellant therefore should not be barred from working in the mortgage industry in any capacity for a period of five years."

1.6 The Presiding Officer further generally concurs with the ALJ, as the latter articulated in Conclusion of Law No. 18 of the Initial Order, that administrative law judges lack authority to invalidate legislation and agency regulations. For the same reason, this Presiding Officer lacks authority to officially consider the constitutionality of laws enacted by the Legislature with the express requirement that they be administered by the Department, or to invalidate prior rulemaking without complying with the rulemaking requirements of Chapter 34.05 RCW. Accordingly, the Presiding Officer must decline to consider assertions of unconstitutionality raised by Respondent at trial and in Respondent's Response.

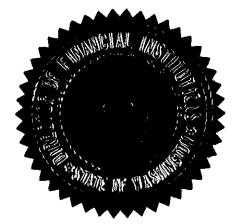
2.0 FINAL DECISION AND ORDER

For all of the reasons set forth above, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

- 2.1 The Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law as set forth in the Initial Order are confirmed except as set forth above in Subsections 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5, inclusive.
- 2.2 Pursuant to RCW 19.146.310, the application of SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR., for a loan originator's license with the Department of Financial Institutions is DENIED, and the Department has authority to and shall deny any loan originator's application he files up to and including APRIL 3, 2008.
- 2.3 SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR. may not work as a loan originator in Washington unless the Department licenses him to do so after a future license application made after April 3, 2008. Nothing in this Final Decision and Order shall prohibit SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR. from working in a capacity for a licensed mortgage broker that does not require a license with the Department.

While Respondent shall <u>not</u> after April 3, 2008 be automatically precluded under RCW 19.146.310 from obtaining a loan originator's license, nothing in this Final Decision and Order shall preclude the Department from evaluating, in any future application of SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR., his criminal conviction on April 3, 2001, as a basis for his fitness for a loan originator license, subject, however, to the requirements and limitations of Chapter 19.146 RCW and WAC 208-660.

DATED: March 18, 2008



SCOTT JARVIS
Director & Presiding Officer

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STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES

IN THE MATTER OF INVESTIGATING the Loan Originator License Application under the Mortgage Broker Practices Act of Washington by:

NO. C-07-114-07-SC01

SYLVESTER ABRAHAM REEVES, JR.,

Respondent.

STATEMENT OF CHARGES and NOTICE OF INTENTION TO ENTER AN ORDER TO DENY LICENSE APPLICATION AND PROHIBIT FROM INDUSTRY

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to RCW 19.146.220 and RCW 19.146.223, the Director of the Department of Financial Institutions of the State of Washington (Director) is responsible for the administration of chapter 19.146 RCW, the Mortgage Broker Practices Act (Act)¹. After having conducted an investigation pursuant to RCW 19.146.310, and based upon the facts available as of the date of this Statement of Charges, the Director, through his designee, Division of Consumer Services Director Deborah Bortner, institutes this proceeding and finds as follows:

I. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

- 1.1 Respondent Sylvester Abraham Reeves, Jr. (Respondent Reeves) submitted an application to the Department of Financial Institutions of the State of Washington (Department) for a loan originator license under Gollehon Unlimited Inc. dba Home Sweet Home Lending, a mortgage broker licensed under the Act. The online application was received by the Department on or about December 26, 2006.
- 1.2 Prior Criminal Acts. On December 27, 2000 Respondent Reeves was charged in Superior Court for the County of Pierce in Cause No. 00-1-06214-3 with the following: (a) Possessing Stolen Property in the First Degree in violation of RCW 9A.56.140(1) and RCW 9A.56.150, a felony; (b) two counts of False Statements or Illegal Transfers in violation of RCW 46.12.210, both felonies; and (c) Identity Theft in violation of RCW 9.35.020, a felony. On April 3, 2001, Respondent Reeves entered a plea of guilty to one count of Attempted

STATEMENT OF CHARGES C-07-114-07-SC01 Sylvester Abraham Reeves, Jr. DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
Division of Consumer Services
150 Israel Rd SW
PO Box 41200
Olympia, WA 98504-1200
(360) 902-8703

¹ RCW 19.146 (Amended 2006; Effective January 1, 2007)

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False Statements or Illegal Transfers, as amended, a gross misdemeanor pursuant to RCW 46.12.210 and 9A.28.020.

1.3 Responses to Application Questions. The "Criminal Disclosure" section of the loan originator license application consists of eight questions, and includes the following instruction:

"If the answer to any of the following is "YES", provide complete details of all events or proceedings"
Respondent Reeves answered "no" to the following question on the "Criminal Disclosure" section of his loan originator license application:

- 1-Have you ever been charged with a felony?
- Respondent Reeves answered as follows to the following question in the "Criminal Disclosure" section of the loan originator license application:
 - 5-Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty or nolo contendere ("no contest") in a domestic, foreign, or military court to misdemeanor involving: financial services or a financial services-related business or any fraud, false statements or omissions, theft or any wrongful taking of property, bribery, perjury, forgery, counterfeiting, extortion, or a conspiracy to commit any of these offenses? Respondent Reeves response was: "in December 2000 I plead guilty to (attempted false statements or illegal transfers). An x-friend took a id of mine and registered a car with stolen parts on it. He got charged with having stolen property and I pled guilty to attempted false statements or illegal transfers because of the car."

Respondent Reeves was obligated by statute to answer questions on the loan originator license application truthfully and to provide the Department with complete details of all events or proceedings.

II. GROUNDS FOR ENTRY OF ORDER

2.1 Requirement of No Prior Convictions. Based on the Factual Allegations set forth in Section I above, Respondent Reeves fails to meet the requirements of RCW 19.146.310(1)(d) and WAC 208-660-350(2)(c) by having been convicted of a gross misdemeanor involving dishonesty or financial misconduct or a felony within seven years of the filing of the present application.

1	4.2 Respondent Sylvester Abraham Reeves, Jr. be prohibited from participation in the conduct of the affairs of any licensed mortgage broker, in any manner, through December 26, 2013.
2	V. AUTHORITY AND PROCEDURE
3 4	This Statement of Charges and Notice of Intention to Enter an Order to Deny License Application and
5	Prohibit from Industry (Statement of Charges) is entered pursuant to the provisions of RCW 19.146.220,
6	RCW 19.146.221, RCW 19.146.223 and RCW 19.146.230, and is subject to the provisions of chapter 34.05
7	RCW (The Administrative Procedure Act). Respondent may make a written request for a hearing as set forth in
8	the NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO DEFEND AND OPPORTUNITY FOR HEARING accompanying this
9	Statement of Charges.
10	Dated this 170 day of April, 2007
11	D. ABul.
12 13	DEBORAH BORTNER Director
14	Division of Consumer Services Department of Financial Institutions
15	Presented by:
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17	FATIMA BATIE
18	FATIMA BATIE Financial Legal Examiner Supervisor
19	Approved by:
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21	JAMES R. BRUSSELBACK
22	Enforcement Chief
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