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Sarah Palin's Arizona Home Purchase Clouded By Foreclosure Fraud, Analysis Finds



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Sarah Palin's growing list of titles — author, documentary subject, roving bus tour host — just got bigger. She may now be able to add "mortgage fraud victim" to her resume.

The conservative celebrity invested in a company that paid \$1.7 million for an Arizona home with a title tainted by the so-called "robo-signer" scandal, during which mortgage companies failed to properly document foreclosures, according to an analysis done by a mortgage fraud examiner in Massachusetts.

Palin [confirmed last week](#) that she was part of a company that bought a five-bedroom house in Scottsdale, Ariz., in May. But [records on the property](#) compiled by the fraud examiner shows that at least two fraudulent signatures were involved in re-financing and foreclosure transactions on the property in the years before Palin's company purchased it, possibly raising questions about the legality of the sale.

"The title problems here are very, very significant, and I believe it is going to require that this be litigated to find out who the legal owner of the property is," said Marie McDonnell, who has been reviewing fraudulent foreclosures in a local Massachusetts county and saw a similarity with the home purchased by the Palin company, Safari Investments LLC.

McDonnell said she and John O'Brien, the Massachusetts Register of Deeds for whom she works, [decided to go public](#) with the Palin foreclosure mess in order to "educate the public"

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/06/10/sarah-palin-arizona-home-foreclosure-fraud_n_875186.html

about what happens when the legal underpinnings of a real estate transaction become compromised.

"If you're buying a foreclosed property, can you be guaranteed you're going to get legal title?" she asked. "There are millions of people facing the same problems, and it was a way for us to raise everyone's awareness of the seriousness of these problems."

A spokesman for Palin did not reply to an e-mail seeking comment.

In a [detailed graphic illustration](#) of the paper chain leading up to the purchase of the 7,900-square-foot brown stucco Scottsdale home, McDonnell provided documents showing two fraudulent signatures involved in a refinancing and eventual foreclosure on the property. One of the signatures was "Linda Green," the robo-signing moniker highlighted in an April ["60 Minutes" piece](#).

"Linda Green" was supposedly a vice president at 20 different banks at the same time, according to the piece. In reality, it was a name forged by many different people at Docx, a company that ginned up legal documents that banks could use in court to proceed with foreclosures.

The "Linda Green" signature [showed up](#) in 2007 in a deed of release on the property from Wells Fargo Bank, when the past owner was refinancing the mortgage, according to the documents compiled by McDonnell. Then in 2008, McDonnell alleges that a "[Deborah Brignac](#)" made signatures on foreclosure-related documents on the property that should not have authorized the transfer of the property to JP Morgan Chase.

According to the documents cited, Brignac was working as a vice president at two different institutions: [JP Morgan Chase Bank](#) and [Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems Inc.](#), an electronic mortgage tracking service. Brignac is listed online as vice president of California Reconveyance Company, which was a subsidiary of Washington Mutual and is now a subsidiary of JP Morgan Chase.

McDonnell said the signatures on those deed documents should not allow the property to have been foreclosed. McDonnell is not a lawyer; she is a certified fraud examiner.

"This was a legal document created for the sole purpose of connecting the dots so that JP Morgan could foreclose," she said.

Efforts to reach Brignac were unsuccessful. A spokesman for JP Morgan declined to comment.

O'Brien, the Southern Essex District Register of Deeds in Massachusetts, noted in a press release that he hoped some good would come of the mess.

"Sadly, Sarah Palin's misfortune will, however, hopefully shine the national spotlight on this issue," the release said. "Given her position in the country, I am sure that she will use her influence to stand up for homeowners and their property rights."