

Hungry Americans and the American Dream: “Too Big to Fail Too Big to Jail” Banks Trigger Foreclosures, Bankruptcies and Poverty

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A Global Research article by Sarah Carlson (originally published by [Liberation](#)) entitled [“American Dream”: Food loaded into Dumpsters while Hundreds of Hungry Americans Restrained by Police](#) (April 05, 2013), brings to the forefront the pernicious role of America’s “Too Big to Fail Too Big to Jail” mega-banks.

“Hundreds of poor people waiting outside of a closed grocery store for the possibility of getting the remaining food is not the picture of the “American Dream.” Yet on March 23, outside the Laney Walker Supermarket in Augusta, Ga., that is exactly what happened.”



The grocery store in Augusta, Georgia is one among thousands of small businesses across the Southern States which are routinely speared-headed into bankruptcy.

SunTrust Bank had ordered the eviction of the owner and the confiscation of all the assets.

While *“residents filled the parking lot with bags and baskets hoping to get some of the baby food, canned goods, noodles and other non-perishables”* SunTrust had ordered that all the food *“be loaded into dumpsters and hauled to a landfill instead of distributed.”*

“People got children out here that are hungry, thirsty,” local resident Robertstine Lambert told Fox54 in Augusta. “Why throw it away when you could be issuing it out?”

Throwing away food recalls the words of John Steinbeck, in *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939):

“There is a crime here that goes beyond denunciation. There is a sorrow here that weeping cannot symbolize. And children dying of pellagra must die because a profit cannot be taken from an orange. And coroners must fill in the certificates—died of malnutrition—because the food must rot, must be forced to rot ... and in the eyes of the people there is a failure; and in the eyes of the hungry there is a growing wrath. In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage.” ([See Occupy Wall Street, Georgia](#))



Augusta Chronicle. Residents and local police

SunTrust Bank: Financial Abuse

SunTrust bank is a subsidiary of Suntrust Bank Inc. It is among the largest banks in the US with assets in excess of US\$170 billion. It operates more than 1600 bank branches across the Southern states.

What SunTrust has inflicted on the residents of Augusta, Georgia is part of a broader pattern of abuse and financial manipulation.

SunTrust was among the main financial actors involved in the Housing and Mortgage meltdown which swept across the US at the height of the financial crisis.

[Based on recent data](#), SunTrust continues to trigger foreclosures and bankruptcies of small and medium sized enterprises.

SunTrust is among the ten top banks currently foreclosing the most homes in the US together with Bank America, JPMorgan Chase, New York Mellon and Citigroup.

“More than 6,000 loans serviced by SunTrust Banks Inc. (NYSE: STI) were in foreclosure as of February [2013]. Like most U.S. banks, SunTrust has been embroiled in controversy over its lending and foreclosure practices in recent years. SunTrust was one of five major lenders that in November agreed to pay a combined \$162 million to settle complaints that it charged improper fees on home finance loans for veterans. Earlier in 2012, the bank agreed to pay \$21 million to settle allegations that it overcharged more than 20,000 Hispanic and African American borrowers between 2005 and 2009.”[247wallst.com, March 12, 2013](#)

Thousands of households which had mortgages with SunTrust continue to lose their homes as a result of the bank's foreclosure procedures.

These families have been precipitated into poverty. Many of the hungry people in America referred to in Sarah Carlson's article had mortgages with SunTrust, and lost their homes during the foreclosure crisis.

The Record of Paperwork Manipulation

The practices of SunTrust Mortgage (an affiliate of SunTrust) are well documented in complaints filed with the Better Business Bureau. Comments by SunTrust customers [pertaining to Mortgages recorded on the Consumer Affairs website](#) point to a practice of paperwork manipulation:

"Good luck to all who have to deal with this nightmare of a bank!"

"They should be charged with some criminal fraud for misrepresentation."

We did everything the right way and have only gotten 14 months of lies and running in circles.

What they are doing should be against the law. They just play with your emotions!

[A selection of comments from Consumer Affairs](#) is included below:

Kimberly of Lansdale, PA on March 22, 2013

I share the same horror stories as everyone else regarding this mortgage company [SunTrust]! My situation consisted of falling behind on my mortgage. Customer service's answer to me was to sell my home if I can't afford to live there. Helpful? No. I was put into a forbearance payment plan that started out only being a 3-month thing that I was told I had to prove that I made my payments in order to get approved. This lasted 16 months. The payments started out small that eventually went up to my original mortgage payment I couldn't afford to begin with. Then after calling every week for almost a year and getting different answers every time I called, I decided to put my house on the market. I had a buyer who was approved for his loan and Suntrust wouldn't take his offer which was only \$25,000 less than what I owed on mortgage to complete this short sale.

While house still listed, my realtor took someone to show the house and locks had been changed on my doors. No one contacted my realtor knowing the house was up for short sale. Oh, it gets better. My house has been in my name for 4 years just sitting there empty! This house has been in foreclosure for 4 years and they just keep trying to dig deeper to destroy my life and credit! Oh, trust me when I tell you this is war! I am not going to let these non-educated people get away with this. How could you run a mortgage company with people who don't have any knowledge of mortgages?

Good luck to all who have to deal with this nightmare of a bank!

David of Galesburg, IL on March 4, 2013

I have great credit and with low interest mortgage rates, and I decided to refinance my mortgage. Suntrust currently holds it, so I thought it would be faster to refi through them. Current interest rate is 5.375 and I can refi for 15 years at 3.1 annual, thus having the same payment for 15 years versus the 27 years that I have now. I started the refi November 2012. Every time I turn around, they are claiming they need a different document. Some documents have been submitted at least twice, and most recently they want a copy of my schedule E from my 2011 taxes. They claimed they could not read the one faxed months ago.

They are continuously playing around, costing me money and a lot of equity. Is this criminal? Any class action lawsuits for this? Anyone have any ideas? Thanks.

Kathy of West Allis, WI on Feb. 4, 2013

Suntrust has held my mortgage for my 2nd house for years and when my husband passed 3 years ago, I have been trying to do these: 1) refinance; 2) have my real estate taxes paid in the same year they were due and; 3) have his name removed from the title. What I have gotten so far is a complete runaround. I have been working with a David ** and he is useless in helping me. After 8 months of trying to refinance and sending 5 separate copies of my husband's death certificate and past income taxes because they did not have them or different people needed them, they kept telling me we would close in Oct., then Nov., then middle of Jan. and now they say they could not complete the refi unless I had another signer on the note.

They did this after I had someone send a check in because I do not use checks anymore and they wanted to see 12 consecutive payments from my account. After I told them what happened, they did not care. The Real Estate taxes have been paid the year after the taxes were due and all I got for a response was "We have until the 31st of Jan. to get them paid." This year, they are not paid yet and it is Feb 4. David ** says it is customer service; customer service says they can't release them due to the refi. bla, bla, bla.... To have my husband's name removed, they want me to send another copy of his death certificate to someone else. When I tell them they have it and for them to just call David **, they say they cannot do that.

This company stinks and anyone who chooses to use them is in for a big disappointment. They should be charged with some criminal fraud for misrepresentation.

Jerry of Eggharbor Twp, NJ on Feb. 19, 2013

Please help. My mom and I have been dealing with this drama and lies from Suntrust Mortgage for over 9 months. They always have an excuse why they should not approve the modification! We own an investment property that my brother Dave lives in. Recently he had 2 friends move out and they could not afford the whole payment. So my mom has given him money for over a year to stay current, but then she depleted all the money trying to keep up with the loan! First, Suntrust (who is the second mortgage company) said if Chase, your first mortgage company, modifies your loan, then they would match the interest rate. So after 4 months, Chase modified the loan from 7 to 4.3% so we then sent the final paperwork after we paid the first 3 months of trial

payments!

We got the loan modification's final paperwork. This was the last thing Suntrust needed. They said from 13% interest rate, they would match the first mortgage at 4.3%! We sent all the paper, then they kept on denying the modification. Yesterday they called us and said they could settle for less and we could get rid of the second mortgage! We are scared from reading all this stuff that the government is allowing Suntrust to do this to us American citizens! Suntrust has taken \$70,000 in interest from the \$80K loan we started with and now we still owe \$80K 7 years later. Now they said they will transfer the loan if we don't send them cash to settle.

Please help. We are afraid that they will steal my mom's money and the money she is borrowing from her sister to help pay! They need money by Feb. 25. What should we do? Please help our family. My dad just had a cancer tumor taken out of his brain 2 months ago. We have so much stress and no conclusion or help. I can't believe the government allows Suntrust, Nationstar and Aurora Bank do this to people. This is not fair. Please call me. We are in need of the government's help. My dad is doing radiation, losing all of his hair and afraid we will lose all our money! Please help. We live in New Jersey! Please help!

dianna of Florida, FL on Feb. 1, 2013

We have been working with Suntrust since May 2012. We thought they were working with us, only to find out that they were only playing games with us to buy them time to foreclose. We got contracts at the price that they requested, and each time we got their price they would drag their feet and not respond to our attorney. After our first contract fell through, after the potential buyer waited for 10 months, they raised the contract. We have since gotten 2 other contracts. We lost the first one, the second one walked, and now the third is ready to walk. In the meantime, Suntrust has never been interested in working with us. What they were doing was jerking us around, and then they filed foreclosure papers on us. Now we have to scramble to hire a foreclosure attorney on top of the money we have already spent on our short sale attorney. We did everything the right way and have only gotten 14 months of lies and running in circles. What they are doing should be against the law. They just play with your emotions!

[To read more than 180 complaints directed against SunTrust click here](#)

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