
Wharton, bankruptcy judges to testify at House Judiciary hearing in Memphis

By Bartholomew Sullivan

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Memphis Mayor A C Wharton and two Memphis-based bankruptcy judges are among the witnesses scheduled to testify when a U.S. House Judiciary subcommittee holds a field hearing Monday Downtown.

Wharton, who testified before the same subcommittee in Washington in April, is expected to talk about the city and Shelby County lawsuit against Wells Fargo and on the effect of predatory lending, which he has called "a nightmare."

Webb Brewer, of the Memphis law firm Brewer and Barlow which brought the suit, is also scheduled to testify before the subcommittee on commercial and administrative law, which is chaired by U.S. Rep. Steve Cohen, D-Tenn.

The full committee's chairman, John Conyers, D-Mich., who endorsed Cohen in the 2008 Democratic primary for the 9th Congressional District seat, is expected to attend the hearing. The list of witnesses was released this morning.

A second panel of witnesses includes David Kennedy, chief judge for the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Tennessee and Judge Jennie Latta of the same court. They are expected to be asked about bankruptcy solutions for dealing with housing foreclosures.

A third panel, expected to testify about the home foreclosure situation in Memphis from an academic perspective, includes professor Phyllis Betts of the University of Memphis school of urban affairs and public policy; Sapna Raj of Memphis Area Legal Services; Beverly Anderson of the Community Development Council of Greater Memphis; Steve Lockwood of the Frayser Community Development Corporation; and Scott Bernstein of the Center for Neighborhood Technology.

The hearing will take place at 10 a.m. Monday at Courtroom 335 at the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, the old U.S. Post Office building at 1 North Front Street, Downtown.



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