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SBA gives business loan to woman now under federal indictment

By [Chris Butler](#) / April 1, 2015 / News / [3 Comments](#)





(<http://watchdog.wengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2015/03/Crinel-TV.png>)

Photo courtesy of YouTube.

JUSTICE: Lisa Crinel, who took a substantial SBA loan, is under federal indictment in New Orleans, according to numerous media sources. News reports of her indictment are available on YouTube.

By Chris Butler | Louisiana Watchdog

Lisa Crinel, a New Orleans wedding caterer under federal indictment, according to the FBI, could have gone through a private lender to help her start up her business.

Instead, Crinel, who was also the city's 2004 Zulu Queen, got federal taxpayers involved in starting up her business, called [LACE — The Grand Ballroom](http://www.lacethegrandballroom.com/) (<http://www.lacethegrandballroom.com/>) through the U.S. Small Business Administration.

In all, the SBA gave Crinel \$750,000 last year.

Private lenders, Crinel said, are too strict in their requirements.

With the SBA, an applicant doesn't even have to have his or her paperwork organized, Crinel said.

"I feel as though the SBA is more business friendly," Crinel said.

"I think they understand the business, and sometimes you might not have all the documents in order, whereas with traditional loans from the bankers, they are expecting everything to be more of 'Cross your t's and dot your i's.'"

Crinel said her business took in between \$1.5 million to \$2 million in revenue last year, but she also said she was 31 days late

on her payment to the SBA this month.

“A banker emailed me very upset,” Crinel said.

“He said if it wasn’t paid then the SBA was going to look upon it very negatively. But it was paid today. I thought the email was kind of strong.”

Louisiana Watchdog then asked Crinel why she paid late this month.

“It’s the nature of the business. No one is getting married in February,” Crinel said.

Soon after the interview, Louisiana Watchdog did a Google search on Crinel and discovered something she didn’t disclose.

According to an FBI media release, a federal grand jury indicted Crinel on three counts of fraud this month in a 50-page document. (<https://www.fbi.gov/neworleans/press-releases/2015/twenty-individuals-and-one-corporation-indicted-in-conspiracy-to-commit-30-million-in-health-care-fraud>)



(<http://watchdog.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2015/03/Carls-Jr.-1.png>)

New Orleans TV affiliate WDSU identified Crinel as the owner of LACE (<http://www.wdsu.com/news/local-news/new-orleans/prominent-businesswoman-19-others-indicted-on-federal-charges/31755748>) as well as another business, Priority Care at Home.

Photo courtesy of YouTube.

TAKE A BITE: The Carl’s Jr. in Shreveport, known for its provocative advertisements, recently took \$591,000 from the Small Business Administration.

NOLA.com, meanwhile, said Crinel allegedly defrauded Medicaid for \$30 million for bogus home-health care fees (http://www.nola.com/crime/index.ssf/2015/03/lisa_crinel_former_zulu_queen.html) .

The indictment names 20 other people, according to NOLA.com

The New Orleans Times-Picayune newspaper quoted Crinel’s attorney, Charles “Tuck” Marshall” as saying Crinel would plead not guilty.

Louisiana Watchdog tried to reach Crinel again Tuesday, but she did not reply to a voicemail.

Melissa Daigre, spokeswoman for the SBA’s Louisiana District Office, did not immediately return a request for comment Tuesday about Crinel’s loan or others given to Louisiana business owners, as reported on Openthebooks.com

Adam Andrzejewski, founder of the website, said in a recent Forbes piece that federal officials are doling out billions of dollars in loans through the SBA (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/adamandrzejewski/2014/12/04/the-small-business-administrations-welfare-for-the-wealthy/>) .

Andrzejewski said wealthy business owners nationwide, who could easily get loans through private lenders, are getting the SBA’s help instead.

The SBA, Andrzejewski said, is only supposed to offer loans to business owners who can't get traditional private lenders' help.

SBA officials, he added, have lost sight of their original mission.

Openthebooks.com has records from all 50 states detailing which business owners took SBA loans (<http://www.openthebooks.com/>).

Andrzejewski also wrote the feds aren't good at picking winners and losers and, through these loans, are pitting "one taxpaying business against another." (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/adamandrzejewski/2014/12/04/the-small-business-administrations-welfare-for-the-wealthy/>)



(<http://watchdog.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2015/03/DSC01083.jpg>)

David Tiller, spokesman for the SBA's Tennessee District office, told Tennessee Watchdog this week that businesses cannot qualify for an SBA loan unless they have a tangible net worth that exceeds \$15 million. Tiller also

said such businesses cannot have an average net income more than \$5 million during the past two years. Ruston Wellness and Compounding Pharmacy recently took \$400,000 from the SBA, according to Openthebooks.com

All of the business owners Louisiana Watchdog reached out to Tuesday were either unavailable to speak or declined to comment.

Among the businesses that took SBA loans, according to Open The Books:

- Fluid Technology Mud Service International, based in Scott, took \$2.7 million.
- Camelia Sand and Gravel, based in Pearl River, took \$977,000.
- Ruston Wellness and Compounding Pharmacy, based in Ruston, took \$400,000.
- Shreveport's Carl's Jr. restaurant, known for its provocative commercials, took \$591,000.
- Bossier City's Chuck E. Cheese took \$282,000.
- Baton Rouge's JCN Financial and Tax Advisory Group took \$785,000.

Andrzejewski said that since 2007, nearly 35,000 "small business" loans between \$1 million and \$5 million have gone to various companies and country clubs.

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Chris formerly served as staff reporter for Watchdog.org.

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