BETTER MARKETS

– FACT SHEET –

REPORT: WALL STREET'S CRIME SPREE 1998-2020

395 Major Legal Actions and $195+ Billion in Fines and Settlements Over the Last 20 Years

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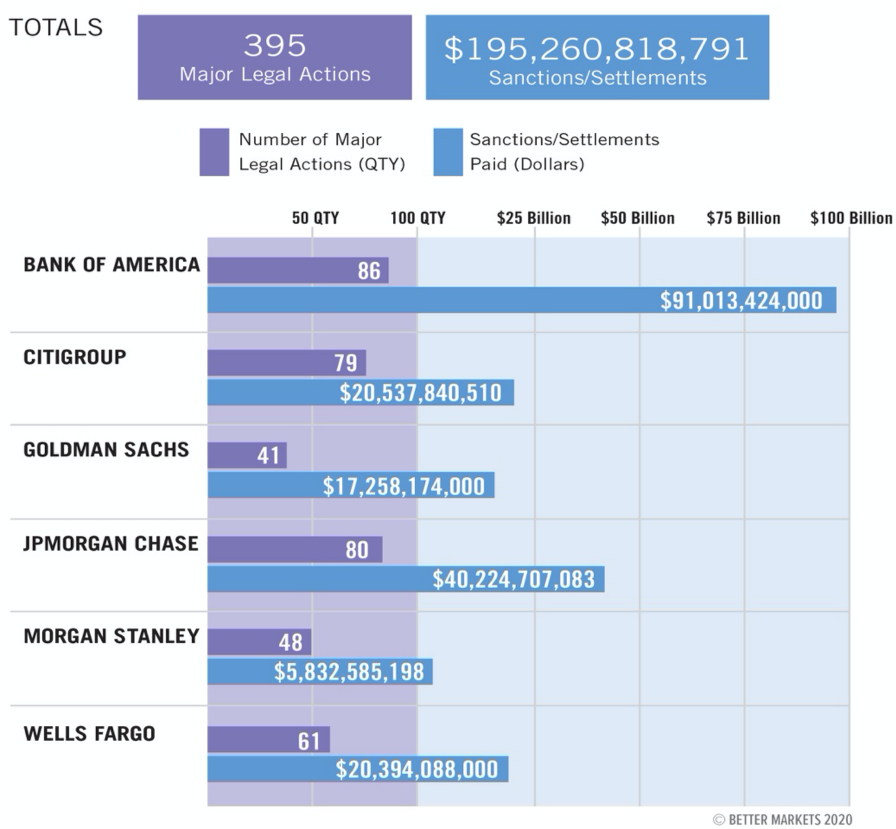
For more than 20-plus years, the nation's six largest banks have engaged in a wide range of illegal activities without facing meaningful consequences. These megabanks—Bank of America, Citigroup, Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, Morgan Stanley and Wells Fargo—have repeatedly committed fraud, market manipulation, and other shocking abuses against their clients, investors and the financial markets themselves. A Better Markets Report details for the first time their extraordinary RAP sheets, totaling nearly 400 major legal actions and over $195 billion in fines and settlements as follows:



The Report provides a summary of the number and nature of the 395 actions and sanctions; illustrative examples for each bank; and, finally, specific details about each of the cases included. The extensive survey actually understates the magnitude of the unlawful actions by the banks because it only includes major legal actions—not every governmental action—taken against the banks in response to their illegal activities. In addition, it includes relatively few private lawsuits against the banks alleging financial fraud and other abuses.

Importantly, the Report categorizes the 395 major legal actions according to when the substantive violations occurred, not when a particular action was resolved or finalized, the timing of which is unrelated to the banks' unlawful conduct. The three time periods are (1) prior to the 2008 financial crash or pre-crash; (2) related to the 2008 crash; and (3) after the crash or post-crash. As the Report shows, the banks lawbreaking has actually increased in the last decade according the number of major legal actions:

The Report includes the following sections:

- An Introduction providing an overview of the crime spree;
- The collective RAP sheet for all six megabanks;
- Summaries of the violations of each bank;
- Prime examples of the violations committed; and
- A detailed rundown, with links, of all 395 major actions reflected in the Report for each bank.

The key aspects of the Report include:

THE BROAD SCOPE OF THE VIOLATIONS. The nature and variety of the violations from 1998 through today are astounding, spanning virtually every conceivable type of white-collar crime or violation of law that a bank could commit. They encompass everything from fraud, money laundering and market manipulation to foreclosure abuses, unlawful debt collection practices, antitrust violations, conflicts of interest and kickback schemes. Many of the violations were on a grand scale, lasting for years and inflicting serious damage on the financial markets and countless investors. They include the widespread sale by multiple banks of billions of dollars in mortgage-backed securities that served as the primary fuel for the 2008 financial crisis; Goldman Sachs' recent guilty plea for its role in a brazen scheme to defraud Malaysia's sovereign wealth fund and corrupt the nation's political process; and JPMorgan's settlement of its third criminal case in the last several years for manipulating two financial markets for almost a decade.

THE RELENTLESS PATTERN. All six of these megabanks were heavily engaged in illegal activity before the devasting and historic financial crash of 2008; they reached new heights of lawlessness in connection with the crash; and they continued to violate the law with abandon in the post-crash era. In fact, it's gotten worse as they continue to violate the law and generate massive profits and huge compensation packages for their executives, without facing any meaningful punishment, deterrence or accountability.

MONEY DOESN'T PUNISH OR DETER. The banks' nonstop illegality confirms that the cops on the Wall Street beat have failed to police our financial markets effectively. The Report also shows that the media has failed to convey the true significance of this pattern, as news stories tend to frame each new sanction or settlement as an isolated and often even impressive law enforcement result, without accounting for the long recidivist history that trails behind each of these banks. The Report also makes clear that the banks' incorrigible behavior won't change until fines grow to be more than just a fraction of a bank's profits; individual executives in the upper ranks of management are personally held accountable; and the banks face collateral consequences that limit their ability to continue conducting business as usual if they violate the law.

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Better Markets is a public interest 501(c)(3) non-profit based in Washington, DC that advocates for greater transparency, accountability, and oversight in the domestic and global capital and commodity markets, to protect the American Dream of homes, jobs, savings, education, a secure retirement, and a rising standard of living. Better Markets fights for the economic security, opportunity and prosperity of the American people by working to enact financial reform, to prevent another financial crash and the diversion of trillions of taxpayer dollars to bailing out the financial system. By being a counterweight to Wall Street's biggest financial firms through the policymaking and rulemaking process, Better Markets is supporting pragmatic rules and a strong banking and financial system that enables stability, growth and broadbased prosperity. Better Markets also fights to refocus finance on the real economy, empower the buyside and protect investors and consumers.

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