

# THE STATE CENTER CONSUMER PROTECTION REPORT

January 2017

## About the State Center Consumer Protection Report

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The National State Attorneys General Program at Columbia Law School's Consumer Protection Report is now the State Center Consumer Protection Report ("Consumer Protection Report"). Published by **The Center for State Enforcement of Antitrust and Consumer Protection Laws** ("State Center") in partnership with **StateAG.org**, the Consumer Protection Report is a monthly compilation of state attorney general press releases on local and national consumer protection efforts, including investigations, court cases, consumer alerts and advocacy initiatives. It makes no effort to prioritize, analyze or comment on the information presented in the press releases and their potential impact on consumers.

The Consumer Protection Report relies solely and exclusively on state attorney general press releases, and thus is not an exhaustive representation of state attorney general consumer protection activity.

The Consumer Protection Report is produced through the State Center's State AG Consumer Protection Initiative: a website featuring all current and previous editions of the Report and a database, allowing visitors to conduct key-word and drop-down menu searches of all previous editions. To visit the Initiative website, please visit [www.statecenterinc.org/cpi-newsletter](http://www.statecenterinc.org/cpi-newsletter).

- If an office would like their consumer protection activity included in subsequent newsletters, please [contact us](#).
- **Newsletter sign up:** To sign up for the monthly Consumer Protection Report, please [sign up here](#).



**For more information about the State Center and StateAG.org, please visit our websites:**

State Center: <http://www.statecenterinc.org>

StateAG.org: [www.stateag.org](http://www.stateag.org)

## Table of Contents

Consumer Protection Cases.....	4
ARIZONA.....	4
COLORADO.....	5
FLORIDA .....	6
ILLINOIS .....	7
IOWA.....	8
KANSAS.....	8
KENTUCKY .....	8
MAINE .....	9
MASSACHUSETTS.....	9
MICHIGAN .....	10
MISSISSIPPI.....	10
NEVADA.....	11
NEW HAMPSHIRE.....	11
NEW JERSEY .....	11
NEW MEXICO .....	13
NEW YORK.....	14
NORTH CAROLINA .....	18
OHIO.....	19
PENNSYLVANIA .....	20
SOUTH DAKOTA .....	21
TEXAS .....	21
VIRGINIA.....	22
WASHINGTON.....	22
Multistate Cases.....	23
Western Union Settlement.....	23
Ameriprise Group Settlement.....	24
Constitutionality of CFPB – Motion to Intervene.....	24
Aetna-Humana Merger .....	25
Accrediting Council For Independent Colleges And Schools Lawsuit .....	26
Questcor Pharamaceutical Settlement.....	26
Moody’s Settlement .....	27

Medicaid Fraud .....	28
Multistate.....	28
ARKANSAS .....	28
CONNECTICUT .....	29
FLORIDA .....	29
NEW YORK.....	30
NEVADA.....	30
OHIO.....	31
Consumer Advocacy.....	31
ALABAMA .....	31
ARKANSAS .....	32
FLORIDA .....	33
GEORGIA .....	33
ILLINOIS .....	35
KANSAS.....	35
KENTUCKY .....	36
MAINE .....	36
MARYLAND.....	38
MASSACHUSETTS .....	38
MICHIGAN .....	38
MISSISSIPPI.....	39
MISSOURI .....	39
MONTANA.....	40
NEW JERSEY .....	40
NEW MEXICO .....	41
NEW YORK.....	41
NORTH CAROLINA .....	42
OHIO.....	43
OREGON .....	44
PENNSYLVANIA .....	44
SOUTH DAKOTA .....	44
VIRGINIA.....	45
WASHINGTON .....	45

## Consumer Protection Cases

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### ARIZONA

January 27, 2017

#### **Mesa Plumber Found Guilty of Fraud and Theft**

PHOENIX - Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced a jury found Michael Duane Mullet guilty of multiple counts of Fraud and Theft. Mullet used a plumbing fraud scheme to steal more than \$16,700 while working at Lawson Family Plumbing. Mullet convinced 34 customers to pay him directly for plumbing work from April to August 2014. Mullet then deposited the checks into his bank account. The Mesa Police Department launched an investigation after a concerned customer called Lawson Family Plumbing to report Mullet's suspicious activity. In May 2016, a State Grand Jury indicted Mullet on multiple counts of Fraudulent Schemes and Artifices and one count of Theft. Mullet will be sentenced on March 3, 2017.

- *Original Press Release:* <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/mesa-plumber-found-guilty-fraud-and-theft>

January 25, 2017

#### **First Prosecution Under Arizona's New Telemarketing Law**

PHOENIX - Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced the first criminal prosecution resulting from Arizona's new telemarketing statute. Lukeroy Rose, the owner of Rose Marketing, pleaded guilty to making unlawful telephone solicitations and operating a fraudulent telemarketing business. The Arizona Telephone Solicitations statute, amended in August 2016, makes it a class 5 felony for unregistered telemarketers to make unlawful calls to in-state AND out-of-state consumers.

- *Original Press Release:* <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/first-prosecution-under-arizona%E2%80%99s-new-telemarketing-law>

January 18, 2017

#### **AG Brnovich Files Lawsuit Alleging Telemarketing & Do Not Call Violations**

PHOENIX - Attorney General Mark Brnovich today announced his office filed an Arizona Consumer Fraud lawsuit against Adobe Carpet Cleaning, LLC, a Phoenix-based business. Adobe Carpet Cleaning allegedly made telemarketing calls to consumers on the National Do Not Call Registry.

The lawsuit, filed in the Maricopa County Superior Court, alleges that Adobe Carpet Cleaning made unlawful telemarketing calls to consumers since 2011. The lawsuit requests the Court order the business to cease its alleged illegal telemarketing calls and to pay civil penalties and the State's attorneys' fees and costs associated with the matter.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-files-lawsuit-alleging-telemarketing-do-not-call-violations>

January 09, 2017

### **Blodgett Brothers Plead Guilty to Craigslist Employment Scam**

PHOENIX – Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced Aaron Blodgett and Matthew Blodgett pleaded guilty to 4 felony charges for their involvement in a craigslist employment and credit improvement scam. The Blodgett brothers each pleaded guilty to 1 count of Fraudulent Schemes & Artifices, 2 counts of Theft, and 1 count of Securities Fraud.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/blodgett-brothers-plead-guilty-craigslist-employment-scam>

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## COLORADO

January 13, 2017

### **AG Coffman Gets Preliminary Injunction Against Fraudulent Solar Energy System Company**

DENVER- Colorado Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman today announced that a Jefferson County District Court judge has granted the Attorney General's motion for a preliminary injunction against Guaranteed Solar, LLC, a Lakewood company that sold expensive solar energy systems to residential consumers and then kept the consumer's money without delivering the systems. The injunction bars the company from engaging in any further sale of solar energy systems.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://coag.gov/press-room/press-releases/01-13-17>

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## FLORIDA

January 24, 2017

### **Attorney General Bondi and FTC Jointly Settle Lawsuit Against Debt Relief Companies**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi and the Federal Trade Commission announced a settlement with several related debt relief and credit repair services companies and their principal. The settlement resolves allegations that Chastity Valdes and her companies, Consumer Assistance LLC, Consumer Assistance Project Corp. and Palermo Global LLC, engaged in unlawful debt relief operations targeting student loan holders. Among other things, the settlement bans the defendants from operating in the debt relief and credit repair industries.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/F95ECE0D72194AD8852580B20063CD49>

January 18, 2017

### **Attorney General Bondi Sues Tobacco Companies for Violating Settlement Obligations**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi today filed an enforcement motion against ITG Brands, LLC f/k/a Lignum-2 LLC (ITG) and R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company (RJR) to enforce the explicit terms of the tobacco settlement agreement dated Aug. 25, 1997. That agreement resolved Florida’s landmark 1995 lawsuit against RJR and the other major tobacco companies seeking relief from decades of past unlawful actions relating to the marketing and sale of cigarettes.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/FC83300FBEE9D79C852580AC007211AC>

January 12, 2017

### **Attorney General Bondi and OFR Reach Multimillion Dollar Settlements with Online Lender**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi and Office of Financial Regulation Commissioner Drew Breakspear today announced coordinated settlements with the operators of an online lending scheme. The operators of the alleged scheme are Western Sky Financial, LLC, CashCall, Inc., WS Funding, LLC, Delbert Services Corporation and John Paul Reddam, who is President, CEO, owner and director of CashCall.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/2F836464563D0EB5852580A600709370>

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## ILLINOIS

January 26, 2017

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN CHARGES CON ARTISTS WITH MULTIPLE COUNTS OF THEFT, FORGERY AND FINANCIAL FRAUD**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced charges against a suburban Chicago ex-convict couple with extensive criminal backgrounds who have scammed consumers across Illinois. For decades the Browns have been accused of defrauding employers, investors, vendors and landlords, among others.

➤ *Original Press Release:*

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_01/20170126.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_01/20170126.html)

January 24, 2017

### **MADIGAN INTERVENES IN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CASE TO PROTECT HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today moved to intervene in a lawsuit to assure that federal recognition of a national accreditor of many of the worst schools in the for-profit industry remains revoked. The Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) filed the lawsuit after the Department of Education terminated ACICS's recognition as a national accreditor based on the organization's failure to comply with a host of criteria, including failing to develop and implement student achievement standards that measure students' success in their chosen field.

➤ *Original Press Release:*

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_01/20170124.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_01/20170124.html)

January 18, 2017

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN SUES NAVIENT AND SALLIE MAE FOR RAMPANT STUDENT LOAN ABUSES**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a lawsuit against Navient Corporation, its subsidiaries Navient Solutions Inc., Pioneer Credit Recovery Inc. and General Revenue Corporation and Sallie Mae Bank, over widespread abuses across all aspects of its business, including student lending, student loan servicing and student loan debt collection. Madigan's complaint alleges that Navient's practices harmed borrowers and put the company's profits before the interests of millions of student borrowers across the country.

➤ *Original Press Release:*

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_01/20170118.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_01/20170118.html)



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## IOWA

January 04, 2017

### **California-Based Pension Advance Company Banned in Iowa from Illegal High-Interest Lending**

DES MOINES – A California-based company that charged up to 200 percent interest for cash advances on largely military pensions will cease offering Iowans what Attorney General Tom Miller alleges are illegal and exorbitant high-interest advance loans, and refund overcharged consumers. Future Income Payments (FIP) LLC this week paid the state \$35,000 as part of an agreement called an assurance of voluntary compliance. FIP will refund Iowa consumers who were overcharged and modify existing contracts into interest-free loans.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/attorney-general-california-based-pension-advance-company-banned-in-iowa-from-illegal-high-interest/>

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## KANSAS

January 12, 2017

### **AG Derek Schmidt sues company for failing to protect customers' personal information**

TOPEKA – (January 12, 2016) – A national company that manages business documents violated Kansas law by repeatedly disposing of documents containing personal information by dumping them in public trash receptacles, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said in a lawsuit filed this week.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/01/12/ag-derek-schmidt-sues-company-for-failing-to-protect-customers-personal-information>

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## KENTUCKY

January 12, 2017

### **Beshear Transfers nearly \$335,000 to State General Fund from Settlement with Pharmaceutical Company's Antipsychotic Drug**

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 12, 2017) – Attorney General Andy Beshear announced today that his office has transferred nearly \$335,000 to the state's General Fund from a multistate settlement with Bristol-Myers Squibb for unfair or deceptive trade practices with its atypical antipsychotic drug, Abilify.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=242>

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## MAINE

January 06, 2017

### **Attorney General Mills announces further action filed against VW, Audi, Porsche for violating state environmental regulations**

AUGUSTA – Attorney General Janet T. Mills today announced she has filed a lawsuit against Volkswagen AG and its affiliates Audi AG and Porsche AG, as well as their American subsidiaries, for the automakers’ sale of diesel automobiles (including about 3,500 in Maine) fitted with illegal “defeat devices” that concealed illegal amounts of harmful emissions and then allegedly misleading regulators and the public about the emissions.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article.shtml?id=727841>

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## MASSACHUSETTS

January 17, 2017

### **AG Healey to Challenge \$96 Million Rate Increase Request from Eversource**

*Rate Hikes Proposed for NSTAR Electric (\$60 million) and the Western Massachusetts Electric Company (\$36 million); Includes Shareholder Profits of 10.5 percent*

BOSTON – Vowing to fight against unjustified utility profits at the expense of customers, Attorney General Maura Healey today announced her opposition to Eversource electric company’s request to increase its customers’ rates by \$96 million.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/ag-healey-to-challenge-96-million-rate-increase-request-from-eversource.html>

January 13, 2017

### **AG Healey Announces \$30 Million in Debt Relief for Thousands of Massachusetts Students Who Attended American Career Institute**

*Former For-Profit School Admitted to Lying and Violating Massachusetts Law; U.S. Department of Education Takes Unprecedented Action to Cancel Student Loans*

BOSTON – Nearly 4,500 students victimized by the now-defunct American Career Institute (ACI) in Massachusetts will have their federal student loans forgiven by the U.S. Department of Education, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today. The announcement marks the first time the Department has granted a state attorney general’s application to cancel loans for a group of defrauded students.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/30-million-in-debt-relief-for-students.html>

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## MICHIGAN

January 30, 2017

### **Schuette: Ottawa County Man Sentenced to 4 to 20 Years in Ponzi Scheme**

LANSING – Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today announced that Scott Rookus was sentenced by Judge Jon Hulsing of the 20th Circuit Court in Ottawa County to 7 to 20 years for racketeering and 57 months to 10 years for fraudulent sales of securities. Judge Hulsing is also requiring Rookus pay \$4,393,420 in restitution to the victims of his million dollar Ponzi scheme that ran from 2010 to 2015.

- *Original Press Release:* [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-403640--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-403640--,00.html)

January 19, 2017

### **Schuette Files Cease and Desist Against Breast Cancer Charity Who Claimed to Raise Money for Research Grants**

LANSING - Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today announced a Notice of Intended Action and Cease and Desist Order against Breast Cancer Outreach Foundation, Inc., a Florida nonprofit corporation, for violating the Charitable Organizations and Solicitations Act. Violations included false solicitation and diversion of funds raised to other purposes. The foundation has been in operation since July 2014.

- *Original Press Release:* [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-402734--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-402734--,00.html)

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## MISSISSIPPI

January 17, 2017

### **AG Hood Files Suit Against Google over Handling of Student Data**

Attorney General Jim Hood announced today that the state has filed suit against Google Inc., over how the internet giant maintains and uses data collected from Mississippi public school students who have Google's G Suite For Education accounts. Google is accused of collecting personal information and search history obtained from its users in order to advance its own business interests and increase its profit, in violation of the Mississippi Consumer Protection Act.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ago.state.ms.us/releases/ag-hood-files-suit-against-google-over-handling-of-student-data/>

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## NEVADA

January 24, 2017

### **Attorney General Laxalt Announces Guilty Plea of California man for Complex Healthcare Insurance Scam**

Las Vegas, NV - Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt announced that Richard Raymond Ruppert, 53, of California, pleaded guilty for his role in a healthcare insurance scam.... Ruppert participated in a scheme to defraud customers of a personal training business by charging their health insurance companies for medical services that were never provided.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt\\_Announces\\_Guilty\\_Plea\\_of\\_Californi\\_a\\_man\\_for\\_Complex\\_Healthcare\\_Insurance\\_Scam/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney_General_Laxalt_Announces_Guilty_Plea_of_Californi_a_man_for_Complex_Healthcare_Insurance_Scam/)

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## NEW HAMPSHIRE

January 18, 2017

### **Attorney General Brings Enforcement Action Against Opioid Pharmaceutical Company Insys Therapeutics For Its Unfair And Deceptive Marketing Practices Of Its Fentanyl Drug Subsys**

Attorney General Joseph A. Foster today announced that his office has brought an enforcement action under the state's Consumer Protection Act against the makers of a powerful sublingual fentanyl spray product called Subsys. Insys Therapeutics, Inc., a Delaware corporation headquartered in Chandler, Arizona, aggressively marketed its brand name opioid, Subsys, a sublingual fentanyl spray that, as an opioid pain medication, is classified as a Schedule II controlled substance.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.doj.nh.gov/media-center/press-releases/2017/20170118-insys.htm>

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## NEW JERSEY

January 26, 2017

### **New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs Files Two More Sandy Fraud Complaints Against Home Improvement Contractors**

NEWARK – Continuing the State’s crackdown on Superstorm Sandy fraud, Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the Division of Consumer Affairs have filed two separate actions against home improvement companies and their owners alleging they used deceptive business

practices in order to obtain \$1.4 million in federal relief funds from 51 homeowners who paid them to repair and elevate their storm-damaged properties.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170126a.html>

January 25, 2017

**New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs Cites 136 Home Improvement Contractors in 2016 for \$1.9 million in Consumer Restitution and Civil Penalties**

NEWARK – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the Division of Consumer Affairs announce today the issuance of 136 Notices of Violation to contractors during 2016, resulting in total penalties of \$483,350 and total restitution of \$1,421,938.41. These actions are part of the Division’s continuing crackdown on contractors who do not comply with state laws.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170125b.html>

January 20, 2017

**Division of Law Litigation Efforts Brought in \$189-Million-Plus In Settlements, Judgments and Collections in 2016**

TRENTON – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino announced today that the Division of Law (DOL) obtained settlements, judgments and collections totaling more than \$189 million in 2016 through litigation on behalf of the State. Monies obtained through litigation included settlements and judgments resulting from lawsuits alleging consumer, securities and other fraud, environmental cases, taxation matters and other types of affirmative litigation and debt recovery actions. Litigation-related payouts by the State in 2016 totaled approximately \$87.8 million.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170120a.html>

January 12, 2017

**After New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs Investigation, CITGO Agrees to Pay \$450,000 Fine, Implement Compliance Program to Resolve Allegations of Sales of Unbranded and Off-Brand Fuel in Violation of Motor Fuels Act**

NEWARK – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the Division of Consumer Affairs announce that Texas-based CITGO Petroleum Corporation (“CITGO”), a large international motor-fuel refiner, transporter and marketer, has agreed to pay \$456,610 and implement a compliance program after an investigation by the Division, through its Office of Consumer Protection and Office of Weights and Measures, found violations of the Motor Fuels Act, the Consumer Fraud Act and the Advertising Regulations.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170112a.html>

January 06, 2017

**Man Pleads Guilty and Faces Prison for Stealing Nearly \$300,000 from Customers of His Debt Relief Businesses in Maplewood and Jersey City**

TRENTON – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino announced that a man who stole approximately \$298,000 from customers of his two fraudulent debt relief businesses pleaded guilty today to one of the two scams. Germaine Theodore promised customers of TGC Movement in Maplewood and Save My Future in Jersey City big reductions in their monthly bills, but he instead stole their money through Ponzi schemes. He will face a recommended sentence of seven years in state prison.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170106b.html>

January 04, 2017

**California Fertility Clinic Agrees to Stop Barring Consumers from Posting Negative Online Reviews Following New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs Investigation**

NEWARK -- Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the Division of Consumer Affairs have reached a settlement with a California fertility clinic that has agreed to remove a clause in its contracts that effectively barred consumers from posting negative reviews of their experience with the clinic and its personnel on crowd-sourced review websites by threatening them with fines of up to \$10,000 for each day the content remained on the web.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170104a.html>

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## NEW MEXICO

January 24, 2017

**Attorney General Balderas Sues Takata & 15 Automakers over Dangerous Airbags**

Santa Fe, NM – Today, New Mexico Attorney General Hector Balderas announced that he filed a lawsuit this week against Japanese airbag manufacturer Takata and 15 automakers over dangerous and defective airbags that function as fragmentation grenades. Hundreds of thousands of which were installed in cars sold or offered for sale in the State of New Mexico.

➤ *Original Press Release:*  
[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas\\_Sues\\_Takata\\_\\_\\_15\\_Automakers\\_over\\_Dangerous\\_Airbags.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas_Sues_Takata___15_Automakers_over_Dangerous_Airbags.pdf)

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## NEW YORK

January 31, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Obtains Settlement With DeVry University Providing \$2.25 Million In Restitution For New York Graduates Who Were Misled About Employment And Salary Prospects After Graduation**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced a settlement with for-profit education company DeVry Education Group, Inc. and its subsidiaries DeVry University, Inc. and DeVry/New York, Inc. (collectively, “DeVry”). The settlement resolves an investigation that revealed that DeVry lured students with ads that exaggerated graduates’ success in finding employment at graduation...

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-obtains-settlement-devry-university-providing-225-million-restitution>*

January 30, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces \$20K Agreement With Pet Store Chain Owner Who Abused Animals And Falsified Documents To Make Them Appear Healthy Enough To Sell**

POUGHKEEPSIE – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced that pet store owner Richard Doyle has entered into an agreement with the Attorney General’s office permanently barring him from working as a pet dealer and imposing significant fines and penalties for repeated animal cruelty.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-20k-agreement-pet-store-chain-owner-who-abused-animals-and>*

January 26, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Settlement With Computer Manufacturer After Data Breach Exposed More Than 35,000 Credit Card Numbers**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced a settlement with Acer Service Corporation (“Acer”), a computer manufacturer based in Taiwan, after a data breach of its website exposed over 35,000 credit card numbers. An investigation by the A.G.’s office revealed that sensitive Acer customer information was not protected by Acer for almost a full calendar year. Acer has agreed to pay \$115,000 in penalties and to shore up its data security practices.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-settlement-computer-manufacturer-after-data-breach-exposed>*

January 26, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces Prison Sentence Of Orange County Man For Stealing Hundreds Of Thousands In Investment Scheme**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced the sentencing of William Vogt, a resident of Orange County, on felony charges for posing as internationally renowned fashion designer “Bill Bolland” to lure his victim into making more than \$350,000 in investments. Instead, Vogt stole the monies and used them for personal expenses.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-prison-sentence-orange-county-man-stealing-hundreds>*

January 26, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Sues Company For Allegedly Scamming Thousands Of Homeowners Seeking Property Tax Relief Through State “Star” Exemption Program, Secures Temporary Restraining Order Against Defendants**

MINEOLA—Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced a lawsuit against STAR Exemption Advisor, YCA Corp. and its business owner Arie Gal, for allegedly scamming thousands of new homeowners out of at least \$1.5 million by charging them excessive fees to enroll them in the Basic STAR Exemption Program, which is otherwise free.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-sues-company-allegedly-scamming-thousands-homeowners-seeking-property>*

January 23, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces Settlement With Cigna That Eliminates Policies Which Barred Coverage For Testing Of Psychiatric Conditions**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced that his office has reached a settlement with Cigna, requiring the health insurer eliminate a written ban on coverage for claims for neuropsychological testing of psychiatric conditions and autism spectrum disorder. Cigna will also reprocess denied claims for autism spectrum disorder.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-settlement-cigna-eliminates-policies-which-barred-coverage>*



January 19, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces National Settlement With Anthem To Discontinue Pre-Authorization For Opioid Addiction Treatment Drugs**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced that Anthem, the second largest health insurer in the country, will end its policy of requiring prior authorization for medication-assisted treatment (“MAT”) for opioid use disorder. The agreement includes Empire BlueCross BlueShield (BCBS), which insures over 4 million New Yorkers, and resolves Attorney General Schneiderman’s investigation of prior authorization practices and network adequacy for MAT treatment. The agreement comes several months after Attorney General Schneiderman announced a similar agreement with Cigna.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-national-settlement-anthem-discontinue-pre-authorization>*

January 13, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman And Acting Tax Commissioner Manion Announce Felony Conviction Of Unregistered Long Island Tax Preparer**

ALBANY – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman and Acting Taxation and Finance Commissioner Nonie Manion today announced the conviction of Susan Murillo, 46, of Elmont, NY, for Attempted Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a class “E” felony. Murillo was arrested in October 2016 on felony charges arising from her unregistered tax preparer business and her submission of fraudulent tax returns on behalf of taxpayers.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-and-acting-tax-commissioner-manion-announce-felony-conviction>*

January 12, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces Indictment And Arraignment Of Long Island Attorney And Operators Of “Three-Quarter” Houses On Charges Of Medicaid Fraud And Money Laundering**

NEW YORK—Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced the indictment and arraignment of attorney Anthony Cornachio, 74, of Garden City as well as the indictment and arraignment of NRI Group, LLC. (“NRI”) and Canarsie A.W.A.R.E., Inc. (“Canarsie”), both Medicaid-enrolled drug treatment programs companies controlled by Cornachio. Also announced today was the indictment and arraignment of three-quarter housing operators Yury Baumblyt, 66, and Rimma Baumblyt, 60, of Brooklyn, and their company Back on Track Group, Inc.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-indictment-and-arraignment-long-island-attorney-and>*

January 12, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Investigation Results In Return Of \$22.5 Million In Fees Overcharged To 47,000 Citi Customers**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced the resolution of a four-year investigation of Citigroup Global Markets, Inc. (CGMI), a subsidiary of Citigroup, that revealed that CGMI had overcharged over 47,000 of its customers more than \$22.5 million in fees. After the Attorney General’s Office launched its investigation, CGMI revised its policies and procedures to address the fee overcharge issues uncovered in the investigation, and as a part of the agreement announced today, CGMI admits the findings of Attorney General Schneiderman’s investigation.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-investigation-results-return-225-million-fees-overcharged-47000-citi>*

January 10, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces Convictions Of Albany Insurance Broker In Securities Fraud Scheme And Wife In Life Insurance Scam**

ALBANY COUNTY – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced the convictions of Lawrence D. Rosenbaum, 65, of Albany, New York, and his wife, Thomasine Henderson, 66. On January 5, 2017, Rosenbaum pleaded guilty to Grand Larceny, Securities Fraud and Tax Fraud for fraudulently soliciting hundreds of thousands of dollars from investors for kosher and halal cheese factories in upstate New York and bio-energy companies in New York State and Costa Rica.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-convictions-albany-insurance-broker-securities-fraud-scheme>*

January 10, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces Felony Conviction Of Engineering Firm Manager For Making Unauthorized Alterations To Damage Report In Wake Of Superstorm Sandy**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced today the felony conviction of Matthew Pappalardo, 39, of Nassau, for Unauthorized Practice of Engineering. Pappalardo, former Project Manager for Uniondale engineering firm HiRise Engineering, P.C. (“HiRise”), admitted today in Nassau County Supreme Court to altering an engineering report prepared in connection with the assessment of structural damage of residential properties resulting from Superstorm Sandy.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-felony-conviction-engineering-firm-manager-making>*

January 09, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman and Federal Trade Commission File Lawsuit Against Major Dietary Supplement Maker That Marketed Fraudulent Memory Loss Pill To Seniors**

NEW YORK - Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced that, jointly with the Federal Trade Commission, his office has filed a lawsuit against dietary supplement maker Quincy Bioscience, LLC and related companies and executives, charging that they deceptively market the widely-sold supplement Prevagen by falsely claiming that the product improves memory, despite lacking reliable scientific evidence to support this claim.

➤ *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-and-federal-trade-commission-file-lawsuit-against-major-dietary>*

January 09, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Secures Agreement With Hedge Fund Manager Who Mised Investors About Investment Risks**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced the resolution of an investigation into hedge fund manager Vincent Au for misrepresentations made by Au in the course of marketing two hedge funds, Gondor Partners, LP and Gondor Partners, Ltd. (the “Gondor funds”). To resolve Attorney General Scheiderman’s investigation, Au will provide complete and updated risk disclosures to all investors in the funds, will provide all investors with audited financial statements for the funds, and will give all investors an opportunity to redeem their investments in the funds. Au will also pay a penalty of \$20,000 to the State of New York.

➤ *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-secures-agreement-hedge-fund-manager-who-mised-investors-about>*

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## NORTH CAROLINA

January 12, 2017

**AG Stein protects consumers from unfair debt collection practices**

RALEIGH, N.C. – Accelerated Receivables Management, Inc. (ARM), also known as Cutting Edge Collections, has demanded payment for alleged past due debt for medical testing from consumers who believed their testing had been covered by insurance or already paid. In many cases, consumers reported that ARM employees were harassing or threatening in the process, which would be a violation of the NC Unfair and Deceptive Trade Practices Act. ARM, a Florida-based company, has attempted to collect debts from North Carolina consumers while

possessing neither a certificate of authority to conduct business in North Carolina nor a North Carolina collection agency permit.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Press-Releases/AG-Stein-protects-consumers-from-unfair-debt-colle.aspx>

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## OHIO

January 20, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Seeks Consumer Restitution from Home Contractor for Failing to Deliver**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a consumer protection lawsuit against a Hilliard man accused of failing to deliver promised home improvement services to consumers. Bill Distelhorst, doing business as B&D Contracting, is accused of violating Ohio’s Consumer Sales Practices Act and Home Solicitation Sales Act. In the lawsuit, filed in the Franklin County Common Pleas Court, Attorney General DeWine seeks reimbursement for affected consumers and an end to any violations of the law.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Seeks-Consumer-Restitution>

January 12, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Files Consumer Protection Lawsuit Against Alleged Craigslist Scammer**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against a Columbus man accused of failing to deliver home improvement services that he advertised on Craigslist and sold to consumers. Jeremy G. Leeper, doing business as Custom Hardwood Floors, is accused of violating Ohio’s Consumer Sales Practices Act and Home Solicitation Sales Act. In the lawsuit, filed in the Franklin County Common Pleas Court, Attorney General DeWine seeks reimbursement for affected consumers and an end to any violations of the law.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Files-Consumer-Protection>

January 06, 2017

**Telemarketers Accused of Running Work-from-Home Scheme, Faking Amazon Affiliation**

(FREMONT, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against two telemarketing groups accused of running a work-from-home scheme. Buckeye Impact Group LLC and Premier Design Group LLC are accused of misleading consumers and failing to deliver promised services. According to the lawsuit, they sold personalized websites and related marketing packages they claimed would allow consumers to work from home making \$1,000 to \$1,500 a month as an Amazon affiliate.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2017/Telemarketers-Accused-of-Running-Work-from-Home-Sc>

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PENNSYLVANIA

January 11, 2017

**Attorney General Beemer announces civil settlement with home security company**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Bruce R. Beemer today announced the filing of a legal settlement with a Utah-based company that allegedly violated the Commonwealth's Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law as it sold home security systems in Pennsylvania. The settlement reached with Vivint, Inc., more commonly known as APX Alarm Security Solutions, Inc...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=2971](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=2971)

January 03, 2017

**Attorney General's investigation of car dealers protects consumers from deceptive business practices**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Bruce R. Beemer today announced the Office of Attorney General has filed 29 legal actions against individuals and automobile businesses accused of engaging in unlicensed car sales, selling unroadworthy vehicles and publishing deceptive advertisements.

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=2968](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=2968)

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## SOUTH DAKOTA

January 11, 2017

### **Attorney General Jackley Reminds Provigil Users to File Claim Before April Deadline**

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley is reminding consumers who feel they may be entitled to a recovery under the Provigil settlement to file their claim before the April 13, 2017 deadline. In August 2016, Attorney General Jackley joined a multistate settlement with Cephalon and affiliated companies (“Cephalon”) for their anticompetitive conduct to protect the monopoly profits it earned from its landmark wakefulness drug, Provigil.

➤ *Original Press Release: <http://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=1707>*

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## TEXAS

January 19, 2017

### **AG Paxton Stops Sale of Synthetic Drugs in Houston Smoke Shop**

Attorney General Ken Paxton today announced that his office has filed a lawsuit and obtained a temporary restraining order stopping synthetic cannabinoid sales at the Texas Tobacco and Smoke Shop in Harris County. Store owners Sayed Ali and Azmina Ali violated the Deceptive Trade Practices Act by selling synthetic cannabinoids to consumers without disclosing that the substances are illegal and potentially dangerous. Synthetic cannabinoids, known as Kush or synthetic marijuana, are illegal in Texas.

➤ *Original Press Release: <https://texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/ag-paxton-stops-sale-of-synthetic-drugs-in-houston-smoke-shop>*

January 18, 2017

### **AG Paxton Files Lawsuit to Stop the Sale of Dangerous Synthetic Drugs in Dallas**

In his latest effort to protect Texans from the scourge of dangerous synthetic drugs, Attorney General Ken Paxton today filed a lawsuit against the Dallas convenience store Hi Flamez and its owner, Mohamed Bakr, to stop the sale of synthetic cannabinoids. Hi Flamez is accused of violating the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act by selling synthetic pot to customers without informing them that the substances are illegal and potentially hazardous to their health.

➤ *Original Press Release: <https://texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/ag-paxton-files-lawsuit-to-stop-the-sale-of-dangerous-synthetic-drugs-in-da>*

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## VIRGINIA

January 31, 2017

### **CASHCALL TO REFUND MILLIONS TO VIRGINIA CONSUMERS OVER ILLEGAL ONLINE LENDING SCHEME**

RICHMOND (January 31, 2017) - Attorney General Mark R. Herring today announced that Virginia consumers will be receiving \$15.335 million in restitution and debt relief as part of a settlement to resolve claims that CashCall, Inc. and its president and CEO J. Paul Reddam illegally deceived borrowers and collected illegal interest of up to 230% on online loans made in amounts of between \$700 and \$10,000.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/877-january-31-2017-cashcall-to-refund-millions-to-va-consumers-over-illegal-online-lending-scheme>

January 19, 2017

### **[Update] Virginia consumers will be receiving \$27.4 million in forgiven debt as part of the largest multi-state consumer settlement ever led by Virginia.**

Good afternoon--I have a great update to share on this matter. Virginia consumers will be receiving \$27.4 million in forgiven debt as part of the largest multi-state consumer settlement ever led by Virginia. Initial estimates were that Virginia consumers--residents of Virginia or those purchased from a Virginia store--would only be receiving about \$10 million of debt forgiveness, but when the final numbers came in the benefit was much higher. The primary beneficiaries will be veterans and military families who lived near military bases in Virginia and around the country. If any consumer believes they were eligible for the settlement but has not been contacted or seen the credit applied to their bill they should contact Attorney General Herring's Consumer Protection Section as soon as possible...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/869-updated-september-30-2016-virginia-leads-effort-to-secure-96-million-in-debt-relief-compensation-for-veterans-and-other-consumers-harmed-by-usa-discounters>

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## WASHINGTON

January 18, 2017

### **AG Ferguson files suit against Sallie Mae offshoot Navient Corp., announces Student Loan Bill of Rights legislation**

*Lawsuit alleges multiple deceptive student loan lending, servicing and debt collection practices*

OLYMPIA — Attorney General Bob Ferguson today filed a lawsuit against student loan servicer Navient Corporation, an offshoot of education-finance giant Sallie Mae. In addition, Ferguson also announced his agency-request Student Loan Bill of Rights legislation, introduced this session, to provide more resources for students and establish standards for student loan servicers like Navient.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/ag-ferguson-files-suit-against-sallie-mae-offshoot-navient-corp-announces-student>

## Multistate Cases

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### Western Union Settlement

**Date:** Jan. 31, 2017

**Details:** From **NY AG Press Release:** “Western Union also has agreed to pay a total of \$5 million to the states for the states’ costs and fees. In addition to this settlement with the states, Western Union also settled claims related to fraud-induced transfers with the Federal Trade Commission and U.S. Department of Justice, as announced on January 19, 2017. As part of those related settlements, Western Union has agreed to pay \$586M to a fund that the Department of Justice will administer to provide refunds to victims of fraud induced wire transfers nationwide, including New York victims. In February 2016, New York, along with 48 other states and the District of Columbia, entered into a similar settlement with MoneyGram.”

**States:** 49 States and the District of Columbia (California did not participate in final settlement).

**Example Press Release, NY AG:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-settlement-western-union-develop-stronger-anti-fraud>

**Fed. Agency:** Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Department of Justice, Federal Trade Commission (separate settlement)

**Example Press Release, DOJ:** <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/western-union-admits-anti-money-laundering-and-consumer-fraud-violations-forfeits-586-million>

**Documents:** DOJ Remission Webpage: <https://www.justice.gov/criminal-mlars/remission>



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## Ameriprise Group Settlement

**Date:** January 30, 2017

**Details:** From [Fla. AG Press Release](#): “Attorney General Pam Bondi, the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation and the Florida Department of Financial Services today announced a \$1.5 million life claim settlement agreement reached with subsidiaries of the Ameriprise Group, RiverSource Life Insurance Company and RiverSource Life Insurance Company of New York....Florida’s allocation of the multi-state settlement payment by Ameriprise is more than \$111,000....

**States:** California, **Florida**, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Pennsylvania

[Example Press Release, Fla. AG:](#)

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/F09531C18B1B0439852580B800737418>

**Documents:** Settlement Agreement with Florida :  
[http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/JMAR-AJ4QXM/\\$file/Ameriprise+Florida+Agreement.pdf](http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/JMAR-AJ4QXM/$file/Ameriprise+Florida+Agreement.pdf)

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## Constitutionality of CFPB – Motion to Intervene

**Date:** January 24, 2017

**Details:** From [Ct. AG Press Release](#): “The case – *PHH Corporation, et al. v. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau* – is currently before the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. In an October 2016 ruling, a divided court found the structure of the CFPB unconstitutional. The CFPB filed a petition for rehearing of the decision, and that petition is currently pending before the court. To this point, the Obama administration had vigorously defended the CFPB in the appeal. In today's motion to intervene in the litigation, the attorneys general argue that they have a vital interest in defending an independent and effective CFPB. They have used their authority to bring civil actions in coordination with the CFPB to protect consumers against unfair, deceptive and abusive financial practices. They argue that the court's ruling, if permitted to stand, would undermine the power of state attorneys general to effectively protect consumers against abuse in the consumer finance industry, and significantly lessen the ability of the CFPB to withstand political pressure and act effectively and independently of the President.

**States:** Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington

*[Example Press Release, Ct. AG:](#)*

<http://www.ct.gov/ag/cwp/view.asp?Q=589490&A=2341>

**Documents:** Motion to Intervene:

[http://www.ct.gov/ag/lib/ag/press\\_releases/2017/20170123\\_phh\\_cfpb\\_motiontointervene.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/ag/lib/ag/press_releases/2017/20170123_phh_cfpb_motiontointervene.pdf)

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## Aetna-Humana Merger

**Date:** January 24, 2017

**Details:** From [Pa. AG Press Release](#): “The Aetna-Humana merger would have impacted 454,000 Pennsylvanians, and would have led to higher insurance premiums and lower quality health insurance for seniors....Attorney General Shapiro commended the cooperation among the state attorneys general who joined the Justice Department action, as well as the intensive work among attorneys and staff in the Office of Attorney General....In blocking the merger, the court ruled that the proposed merger is likely to substantially lessen competition in the sale of individual Medicare Advantage plans in 364 counties across the country, including 10 counties in Pennsylvania. Those impacted counties are: Chester, Clinton, Cumberland, Dauphin, Erie, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lycoming, and Perry.

**States:** Delaware, District of Columbia Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia

*[Example Press Release, Pa. AG:](#)*

[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=3006](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=3006)

**Fed. Agency:** Department of Justice

Click here for full list of court filings and Memorandum Opinion:

<https://www.justice.gov/atr/case/us-and-plaintiff-states-v-aetna-inc-and-humana-inc>

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## Accrediting Council For Independent Colleges And Schools Lawsuit

**Date:** January 24, 2017

**Details:** From [NY AG Press Release](#): “Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today joined five other attorneys general in filing a motion to intervene in a federal district court case against the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS), an accreditor of for-profit colleges. Following the U.S. Secretary of Education’s (DOE) decision to terminate ACICS’s recognition as an accreditor in December 2016, the company sued DOE challenging the move. The States are intervening to protect consumers in their states, who rely on federally-recognized accreditors to ensure that colleges offer quality education and protect against abusive practices.

**States:** District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, [Example Press Release, NY AG: https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-five-other-ags-file-motion-intervene-against-accrediting-council](#)

**Fed. Agency:** Department of Education (as defendant).

**Document:** Motion to Intervene:  
[https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/state\\_movants\\_motion\\_to\\_intervene.pdf](https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/state_movants_motion_to_intervene.pdf)

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## Questcor Pharmaceutical Settlement

**Date:** January 18, 2017

**Details:** From [Ak. AG Off Press Release](#): “The State of Alaska joined the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the states of Texas, Washington, New York and Maryland in a \$100 million settlement with Questcor Pharmaceuticals, Inc. The FTC will receive \$90 million, and the states will receive the remainder consistent with the settlement terms. Alaska’s share of the settlement will total over \$2 million, the majority of which must be used for research and treatment of conditions treated with Questcor’s drug. The settlement resulted from claims by the FTC and states that Questcor illegally maintained its monopoly for a certain lifesaving therapeutic drug, enabling Questcor to continue charging over \$34,000 per vial.

**States:** Alaska, Maryland, New York, Texas, Washington

Example Press Release, Ak. AG:

<http://www.law.state.ak.us/press/releases/2017/011817-Questcor.html>

**Fed. Agency:** Federal Trade Commission: <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2017/01/mallinckrodt-will-pay-100-million-settle-ftc-state-charges-it>

**Documents:** Complaint : [https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/files/epress/Case\\_117-cv-00120.pdf](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/files/epress/Case_117-cv-00120.pdf)

Proposed Stipulated Order:

[https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/files/epress/doc\\_02Ex01\\_-\\_Proposed\\_Stipulated\\_Order\\_\(FINAL\\_2017-01-17\\_511pm\)\\_\(SIGNED\).pdf](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/files/epress/doc_02Ex01_-_Proposed_Stipulated_Order_(FINAL_2017-01-17_511pm)_(SIGNED).pdf)

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## Moody's Settlement

**Date:** January 2017 (various dates throughout the month)

**Details:** **CT AG Press Release:** Attorney General George Jepsen announced today that Connecticut, the U.S. Department of Justice, 20 other states and the District of Columbia have reached a settlement agreement with Moody's Corporation, Moody's Investor Services, Inc. and Moody's Analytics, Inc. resolving allegations that the credit rating agency mislead investors when it rated structured finance securities in the lead-up to the 2008 financial crisis. The settlement culminates a seven-year effort led by Connecticut to hold Moody's responsible for its role in the 2008 financial crisis. The settlement requires Moody's to pay \$863,791,823 million to the states and the Department of Justice. The settlement amount will be split among the states and the Department of Justice. Connecticut was the first state to sue Moody's in 2010 and will receive \$31,519,461 million in the settlement, which will go to the state's general fund.

**States:** Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Washington

**Example Press Release, Ct. AG:**

<http://www.ct.gov/ag/cwp/view.asp?Q=589254&A=2341>

**Fed. Agency:** Department of Justice: <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-and-state-partners-secure-nearly-864-million-settlement-moody-s-arising>

**Documents:** Settlement Agreement:

[http://www.ct.gov/ag/lib/ag/press\\_releases/2017/20170113\\_moodys\\_settlementagreement.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/ag/lib/ag/press_releases/2017/20170113_moodys_settlementagreement.pdf)

## Medicaid Fraud

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### Multistate

January 11, 2017

#### **Attorney General Announces Shire PLC Subsidiaries to Pay \$13,571.56 to Resolve False Claims Allegations**

Attorney General Joseph Foster announced on January 11, 2017 that New Hampshire, along with other states and the federal government, reached a settlement with Shire Pharmaceuticals LLC and other subsidiaries of Shire PLC (Shire). The agreement settles allegations that Shire and the company it acquired in 2011, Advanced BioHealing (ABH), employed kickbacks and other unlawful methods to improperly promote Dermagraft, a bioengineered human skin substitute approved by the FDA for the treatment of diabetic foot ulcers.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.doj.nh.gov/media-center/press-releases/2017/20170111-shire-settlement.htm>
- *See also, Florida Attorney General Press Release:* <http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/9AD964E26E2326BB852580A7005F40F3>
- *See also, New York Attorney General Press Release:* <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-350-million-federal-and-multi-state-agreement-shire-plc>

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### ARKANSAS

January 27, 2017

#### **Rutledge Announces First Arrests of 2017 by Medicaid Fraud Control Unit**

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge today announced the arrest of two Arkansas women. Beverly Ann Brooks, 58, of Benton, was arrested and held at the Pulaski County Detention Facility on no bond. She is charged with exploiting an endangered or impaired adult, a Class C felony. She is accused of exploiting \$5,140 from six residents' trust fund accounts at the Highlands of North Little Rock Therapy and Living Center in February 2016.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/first-medicaid-fraud-2017-arrests/>

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## CONNECTICUT

January 12, 2017

### **State-Federal Settlement Reached with Home Health Agency and its Owners to Resolve False Claims Act Allegations**

A Stratford-based home health agency and its owners have reached a \$5.25 million settlement with the state of Connecticut and the federal government to resolve allegations that the company submitted false claims to Connecticut's Medicaid program, Attorney General George Jepsen said today. The settlement stems from a three-year investigation led by the Office of the Connecticut Attorney General after an audit by the Department of Social Services (DSS).

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ct.gov/ag/cwp/view.asp?Q=589194&A=2341>

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## FLORIDA

January 24, 2017

### **Lee County Man Arrested Again Following MFCU Investigation**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and the Lee County Sheriff's Office today announced the second arrest of Ryan Todd Powers, 40, for grand theft of a motor vehicle. Last month, following a MFCU investigation, authorities arrested the Lee County man on two counts exploitation involving an elderly person.

➤ *Original Press Release:*  
<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/93F6432DBCD25C20852580B20076B633>

January 05, 2017

### **Medicaid Provider Arrested for Fraud**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit today announced the arrest of a Gadsden County resident for Medicaid provider fraud. Aretha Derrico, 44, is the owner of a home community based services company called Heavenly Choices. A complaint to the Attorney General's fraud hotline initiated a Medicaid fraud investigation against Derrico for allegedly stealing more than \$57,000 from the Florida Medicaid Program. According to the investigation, Derrico billed for services not provided and for services not authorized for reimbursement.

➤ *Original Press Release:*  
<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/25249912FC7DA8288525809F0068D8A7>

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## NEW YORK

January 12, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Indictment And Arraignment Of Long Island Attorney And Operators Of “Three-Quarter” Houses On Charges Of Medicaid Fraud And Money Laundering**

NEW YORK—Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced the indictment and arraignment of attorney Anthony Cornachio, 74, of Garden City as well as the indictment and arraignment of NRI Group, LLC. (“NRI”) and Canarsie A.W.A.R.E., Inc. (“Canarsie”), both Medicaid-enrolled drug treatment programs companies controlled by Cornachio. Also announced today was the indictment and arraignment of three-quarter housing operators Yury Baumblit, 66, and Rimma Baumblit, 60, of Brooklyn, and their company Back on Track Group, Inc.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-indictment-and-arraignment-long-island-attorney-and>

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## NEVADA

January 13, 2017

### **Attorney General Laxalt Announces Sentencing of Caliente Pharmacist for \$1.5 Million in Insurance and Medicaid Fraud**

Carson City, NV – Today, Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt announced that former Lincoln County Commissioner Adam Katschke, 44, of Caliente, was sentenced for insurance and Medicaid fraud. Katschke previously pleaded guilty to the felonies for his role in defrauding insurance companies by billing for large amounts of compound pharmaceutical prescriptions that were rarely provided as billed to the patients or prescribed by a physician. Katschke was the head pharmacist and owner of Meadow Valley Pharmacy (MVP) located in Caliente, Nevada.

- **Original Press Release:** [http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt\\_Announces\\_Sentencing\\_of\\_Caliente\\_Pharmacist\\_for\\_\\$1\\_5\\_Million\\_in\\_Insurance\\_and\\_Medicaid\\_Fraud/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney_General_Laxalt_Announces_Sentencing_of_Caliente_Pharmacist_for_$1_5_Million_in_Insurance_and_Medicaid_Fraud/)

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## OHIO

January 09, 2017

### **Autumn Health Care of Zanesville, Inc. Ordered to Pay More than \$167,000**

(ZANESVILLE, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine announced today that Autumn Health Care of Zanesville, Inc. has been ordered to repay thousands of dollars that it fraudulently obtained from the Ohio Department of Medicaid and the federal government's Centers for Medicare and Medicaid.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2017/Autumn-Health-Care-of-Zanesville-Inc-Ordered-to>

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## Consumer Advocacy

### ALABAMA

January 26, 2017

### **AG STRANGE WARNS ALABAMIANS TO BE VIGILANT AGAINST INCOME TAX FRAUD SCHEMES**

(MONTGOMERY) – With the onset of the tax season, Attorney General Luther Strange warns Alabamians to be vigilant against income tax fraud and he offers tips to keep from falling prey to certain tax preparers with potentially deceptive offers.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ago.state.al.us/News-977>

January 23, 2017

### **AG STRANGE WARNS OF FAKE CALLS CLAIMING TO BE FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange warns of a recurring scam in Alabama that has arisen again, involving callers who falsely claim to be from the Attorney General's Office. The Attorney General's Office received five calls today from people who received messages purporting to be from the Attorney General's Office and saying that a legal matter must be resolved immediately. In the past, scammers said they were attempting to collect a debt and threatened arrest if a bill was not paid.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ago.state.al.us/News-974>



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## ARKANSAS

January 25, 2017

### **An Eye for Detail Could Spot a Scam**

Scammers are hacking into email accounts of realtors to take money from their clients. The Arkansas Attorney General's office and the Federal Trade Commission have received reports of a scam where a criminal goes through a realtor's email looking for upcoming transactions. The hacker then poses as the realtor or title company representative and emails the hopeful homebuyer with "new" instructions to wire the down payment. But instead of the money going to the title company to secure the home, the money goes straight into the hacker's account.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://arkansasag.gov/media-center/consumer-alerts/an-eye-for-detail-could-spot-a-scam/>

January 18, 2017

### **CONSUMER ALERT: Million Dollar Giveaway? It May Be a Scam.**

LITTLE ROCK – Scammers are using the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's (AGFC) name to steal money from people across The Natural State. The Arkansas Attorney General's office recently received complaints of Arkansans getting phone calls, often with a Jamaican area code, from someone claiming to be from the AGFC. The person receiving the call is told they are the winner of a \$2.5 million giveaway. The only thing they need to do to claim their winnings is wire an \$850 "processing fee."

- *Original Press Release:* <http://arkansasag.gov/media-center/consumer-alerts/million-dollar-giveaway-it-may-be-a-scam/>

January 11, 2017

### **MILITARY ALERT: Tax Protections for Military Families**

LITTLE ROCK - Each year, many active-duty military families are taken advantage of when filing their taxes because they are not aware of the many protections available to them. The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) offers safeguards that include tax deferment and state tax relief for qualifying service members and many of those members have calling the Attorney General's office to get more details.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://arkansasag.gov/media-center/consumer-alerts/tax-protections-for-military-families/>

January 04, 2017

### **Fake Tax Bills tricking Consumers**

LITTLE ROCK – The Arkansas Attorney General warns that con artists are sending fake tax bills claiming to be from the IRS demanding immediate payment from Arkansans and threatening arrest if money is not sent. Consumers are being sent a fraudulent version of a CP2000 form for tax year 2015 as an email with an attachment or by standard mail requesting personal financial information and asking for payment via gift card, prepaid debit card or wire transfer.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://arkansasag.gov/media-center/consumer-alerts/fake-tax-bills/>

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## FLORIDA

January 24, 2017

### **Attorney General Bondi Warns of Repair Scams Following Recent Storms**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—In the aftermath of the deadly thunderstorms that impacted the Southeast, Attorney General Pam Bondi is urging Floridians to be wary of storm-related scams and is offering tips to safeguard against potential scammers.

➤ *Original Press Release:*  
<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/3FD4E281227A11CB852580B2006EDF35>

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## GEORGIA

January 22, 2017

### **CONSUMER ALERT: Georgia Will Not Tolerate Scammers and Price Gougers in Wake of South Central Georgia Storms**

ATLANTA, GA – Attorney General Chris Carr warns consumers to be on the lookout for scams and possible price gouging in the wake of a weather system that moved in to South Central Georgia early January 22, 2017, producing severe thunderstorms, excessive rainfall and tornados resulting in damages and casualties.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://law.ga.gov/press-releases/2017-01-22/consumer-alert-georgia-will-not-tolerate-scammers-and-price-gougers-wake>

January 19, 2017

**CONSUMER ALERT: Attorney General Chris Carr and Secretary of State Brian Kemp Warn Georgians About Football Ticket Scams**

ATLANTA, GA – Attorney General Chris Carr and Secretary of State Brian Kemp today warned Falcons fans about football ticket scams in preparation for Sunday’s NFC Championship against the Green Bay Packers. Not surprisingly, demand for tickets is high, and this creates an opportunity that scammers are already exploiting through the sale of fake, void or stolen tickets. Not only can consumers lose money in these scams, they may also become victims of identity theft if they give a scammer their personal or financial information.

- *Original Press Release: <http://law.ga.gov/press-releases/2017-01-19/consumer-alert-attorney-general-chris-carr-and-secretary-state-brian-kemp>*

January 13, 2017

**CONSUMER ALERT: Attorney General Chris Carr Warns Scammers and Price Gougers to Think Twice Before Targeting Georgia Consumers**

ATLANTA, GA – Attorney General Chris Carr warns consumers to be on the lookout for scams and possible price gouging in the wake of a weather system that moved in to Southwest Georgia on January 2, 2017 through January 3, 2017, producing severe thunderstorms, excessive rainfall and tornados resulting in damages.

- *Original Press Release: <http://law.ga.gov/press-releases/2017-01-13/consumer-alert-attorney-general-chris-carr-warns-scammers-and-price>*

January 12, 2017

**CONSUMER ALERT: Joining a Health Club? Know Your Rights Before You Sign Up**

ATLANTA—Attorney General Chris Carr is urging citizens to know their rights as the New Year creates an uptick in health club memberships. In Georgia, health clubs are required by law to have contracts with their members; however, each individual entity can choose how long its contract lasts – from one month up to 36 months. Keep in mind that a shorter contract puts you at less risk in the event that you lose interest in your exercise regime or the organization goes out of business.

- *Original Press Release: <http://law.ga.gov/press-releases/2017-01-12/consumer-alert-joining-health-club-know-your-rights-you-sign>*

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## ILLINOIS

January 05, 2017

### **MADIGAN URGES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO FORGIVE LOANS OF FORMER ILLINOIS WESTWOOD & EVEREST COLLEGE STUDENTS**

Chicago — As part of her continued crackdown on fraudulent practices in the for-profit college industry, Attorney General Lisa Madigan today renewed her call to the U.S. Department of Education to forgive the federal student loans of thousands of former Illinois students who attended the criminal justice program at Westwood College. Madigan also has previously urged the Department to discharge the loans of former Illinois students who attended Everest Colleges and enrolled in academic programs where the Department found fraud.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_01/20170105.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_01/20170105.html)

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## KANSAS

January 30, 2017

### **Consumer Corner: As tax season approaches, protect yourself from identity theft**

It's hard to believe, but tax season is once again upon us. Many of you have probably already received forms in the mail or electronically and have started working on your tax returns. As the filing season gears up, we mark this week, January 30 – February 3, as Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week. Tax identity theft occurs when a scammer files a fraudulent tax return using your Social Security Number to steal your refund. You may not know this has happened until you file your real return, and the IRS rejects your filing because they think you have already filed.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/consumer-corner/2017/01/30/consumer-corner-as-tax-season-approaches-protect-yourself-from-identity-theft>

January 03, 2017

### **Consumer Corner: Freeze your child's credit report to prevent ID theft**

The new year brings a new law in Kansas that will help protect your child from identity theft. Beginning January 1, 2017, credit reporting bureaus are now required to place a security freeze on the credit report of a child younger than age 16 if requested by a parent or guardian.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/consumer-corner/2017/01/03/consumer-corner-freeze-your-child-s-credit-report-to-prevent-id-theft>

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## KENTUCKY

January 23, 2017

### **Beshear Warns of IRS, Tax-Related Identity Scams**

FRANKFORT, KY. (Jan. 23, 2017) – As tax season begins, Attorney General Andy Beshear issued a scam alert to help Kentucky families avoid falling victim to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and tax-related identity fraud. The start date for electronic filing of tax year 2016 federal and Kentucky returns begins Jan. 23, 2017, and, as a result, reports of tax identity fraud are increasing. Beshear's office has received nearly 100 IRS scam reports over the past seven months, and the most recently reported scams were in Boyd, Greenup and Hardin counties.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=245>

January 11, 2017

### **Attorney General Beshear Warns of Publishers Clearing House Scam**

FRANKFORT, KY. (Jan. 11, 2016) – Winners of the Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes do not receive phone calls about their prizes. And Attorney General Andy Beshear wants to stress this fact as a safeguard to Kentucky seniors and consumers who are being inundated by imposters attempting to scam them out of their money.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=7>

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## MAINE

January 07, 2017

### **Debt Relief Scams**

**Do Not Pay Up Front Fees for Debt Assistance!**

If you're struggling to make ends meet, there are non-profit credit counseling agencies in Maine who can help you figure out a debt relief plan. We discourage you from hiring a company that promises to help you get out of debt for a fraction of the cost and in record time. It simply doesn't work that way. Many times consumers who get had by these scams are promised they can resolve a large amount of debt, say \$20,000 for only \$5,000 in record time if they pay regular monthly fees to a company who will do all of the leg work for them and negotiate with the debtors.

- *Original Press Release:* [http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article\\_scams.shtml?id=727855](http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article_scams.shtml?id=727855)

January 06, 2017

### **Reloadable Card Scams**

Scammers want your money quickly. For years, they've conned people into sending them money via traditional wire transfer services like Money Gram and Western Union. But they're now requesting more easily accessible reloadable cards for payment. You can find these at almost any store - gas station, grocery store, pharmacy, etc. - they have a serial number that is used to transfer funds from the card.

➤ *Original Press Release:* [http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article\\_scams.shtml?id=727848](http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article_scams.shtml?id=727848)

January 06, 2017

### **Classified Ad Scams**

Whether you shop for items via Craigslist or some other online swap site, or through the back pages of the newspaper or Maine's own Uncle Henry's publication, beware that scammers are everywhere. Fraudsters use the internet and these publications to dupe folks trying to sell their items for cash.

➤ *Original Press Release:* [http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article\\_scams.shtml?id=727857](http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article_scams.shtml?id=727857)

January 06, 2017

### **Medical Alert Scams**

You've probably seen the TV ad for a device that you wear and push a button if you've fallen and can't get up. The device calls for help. There are legitimate medical alert devices on the market, but there are also scammers out there attempting to sell fake devices. Do your homework, and make sure you are getting a legitimate product.

➤ *Original Press Release:* [http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article\\_scams.shtml?id=727862](http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article_scams.shtml?id=727862)

January 06, 2017

### **Timeshare Resale Scams**

If you're trying to get out of your timeshare, you've probably discovered that it is a lot harder to get out of your timeshare than it was to sign up for it. Scammers take full advantage of this by offering their services to help you. They often have ads or websites indicating they are timeshare resellers or even real estate agents and say they have buyers for every type of timeshare and they GUARANTEE they can get you out of your contract.

➤ *Original Press Release:* [http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article\\_scams.shtml?id=727867](http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article_scams.shtml?id=727867)

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## MARYLAND

January 31, 2017

### **Legislative Leadership and Attorney General Announce Legislation to Protect Maryland Citizens**

Annapolis, MD (January 31, 2017)—Speaker of the House Michael E. Busch, Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr, and Attorney General Brian Frosh, joined by Democratic Senators and Delegates today announced a package of legislation to make certain that Maryland will be prepared for potential negative actions from President Trump and the Federal Government.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/013117.pdf>

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## MASSACHUSETTS

January 20, 2017

### **AG Healey Announces Legislative Priorities That Enhance Protections for the People of Massachusetts**

BOSTON – Seeking to enhance her office’s ability to protect the people of Massachusetts and strengthen the tools needed to enforce state laws, Attorney General Maura Healey today announced her initial legislative agenda for the 2017-2018 session. A series of bills filed this week with legislative leaders include legislation that would establish a student tuition recovery fund, strengthen the authority of the AG’s Office in energy rate cases, improve the AG’s ability to address violations of the wage and hour laws,...

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/ag-healey-legislative-priorities.html>

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## MICHIGAN

January 27, 2017

### **Raising Awareness: Schuette Recognizes Data Privacy Day**

LANSING - Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today recognized January 28, 2017 as Data Privacy Day and shared a few tips to help citizens protect their personal information.

Data Privacy Day is an international effort held annually on January 28 to create awareness about the importance of privacy and protecting personal information.

➤ *Original Press Release:* [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-403407--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-403407--,00.html)

January 05, 2017

**Schuette Reminds Michigan Consumers Looking for a Healthy Start to 2017 to Shop Smart When Purchasing Gym Membership**

LANSING — Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette once again is reminding Michigan consumers who may be looking to join a gym to start the New Year to shop smart. The Department of Attorney General has issued a consumer alert to help residents make educated choices about fitness center and health club memberships.

- *Original Press Release:* [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-401444--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-401444--,00.html)

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MISSISSIPPI

January 23, 2017

**ATTORNEY GENERAL JIM HOOD REMINDS STORM VICTIMS OF POST-STORM RESOURCES AVAILABLE**

As many consumers have started on the road to recovery following this weekend's severe weather, Attorney General Jim Hood is reminding all Mississippians of the emergency preparedness and post-storm resources available through his office. These materials include tips for natural disaster recovery and how to avoid home-repair scams.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ago.state.ms.us/releases/attorney-general-jim-hood-reminds-storm-victims-of-post-storm-resources-available/>

January 04, 2017

**Phishing Scams Targeting Accounts of PayPal and Amazon Customers**

Attorney General Jim Hood today warned Internet users, particularly customers of websites PayPal and Amazon, about the possibility they could be targets of scammers intending to gather sensitive personal information or infect computers with viruses.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ago.state.ms.us/releases/phishing-scams-targeting-accounts-of-paypal-and-amazon-customers/>

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MISSOURI

January 13, 2017

**AG Josh Hawley Warns Consumers About Storm-related Price Gouging**

Attorney General Josh Hawley today cautioned Missourians to be on the alert during the pending ice storm for storm-related price gouging. Due to Winter Storm Jupiter, forecasters



project that most of Missouri will be affected by severe weather, freezing rain and accumulating ice over the coming days.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2017-news-archives/ag-josh-hawley-warns-consumers-about-storm-related-price-gouging>

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## MONTANA

January 27, 2017

### **Attorney General Fox Encourages Montanans to Assess Their Data Security**

Attorney General Tim Fox encourages Montanans to assess their data security with the release of a new public service announcement promoting Data Privacy Day, celebrated annually by the National Cyber Security Alliance on January 28. This year's theme is 'Respecting Privacy, Safeguarding Data, and Enabling Trust.' "Identity theft can and does happen to people from all different backgrounds," said Attorney General Tim Fox.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://dojmt.gov/attorney-general-fox-encourages-montanans-assess-data-security/>

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## NEW JERSEY

January 25, 2017

### **State Attorney General Clarifies Misunderstanding by Hospice Pharmacy Services Provider**

TRENTON – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino today issued a letter to Enclara Pharmacia in response to their misunderstanding about Governor Christie's rule proposal that will limit initial opioid prescriptions to a five-day supply for treatment of acute pain. It would not apply to the treatment of patients who are currently in active treatment for cancer, receiving hospice care or are residents of long term care facilities. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170125a.html>

January 18, 2017

### **Division of Consumer Affairs' High School 'Consumer Bowl' Competition Begins its 21st Year Today**

NEWARK – The New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs' annual Consumer Bowl, in which high school students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of consumer issues in the state, will kick off its 21st competition today. The competition, in which teams of students answer questions about consumer affairs, begins with the first round of county contests at

Voorhees High School in Hunterdon County. A total of 77 high schools are participating in the event.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170118b.html>

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## NEW MEXICO

January 31, 2017

### **SCAM ALERT: Russian Email Addresses Cloning New Mexico Officials Asking for W2s**

Albuquerque, NM - This afternoon, Attorney General Hector Balderas issued a Scam Alert concerning a dangerous phishing scam targeting schools and employers in New Mexico in an attempt to illegally obtain W2s. The scammers email from addresses that end in “.ru” but show up as the name of someone working in the school district or business in an attempt to trick staff into sending confidential tax information belonging to employees. This scam has already hit four different school districts in New Mexico today.

➤ *Original Press Release:*

[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/SCAM\\_ALERT\\_Russian\\_Email\\_Addresses\\_Cloning\\_NM\\_Officials\\_Asking\\_for\\_W2s.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/SCAM_ALERT_Russian_Email_Addresses_Cloning_NM_Officials_Asking_for_W2s.pdf)

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## NEW YORK

January 17, 2017

### **Statement By A.G. Schneiderman On The Assembly’s Passage Of His Comprehensive Contraception Coverage Act**

NEW YORK - Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman released the following statement upon Assembly passage of his Comprehensive Contraception Coverage Act: “With Republicans in Congress and President-elect Trump looking to roll back the critical gains made under the Affordable Care Act, New York must take the lead and guarantee access to contraceptives.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/statement-ag-schneiderman-assemblys-passage-his-comprehensive-contraception-coverage>

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January 12, 2017

### **Statement By A.G. Schneiderman On Fiat Chrysler**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman issued the following statement on Fiat Chrysler: “I am deeply troubled by evidence presented by the EPA today concerning Fiat Chrysler’s alleged attempts to undermine our nation’s clean air laws. My office was proud to take a leading role in the multi-state investigation of Volkswagen that uncovered flagrant

abuses of New York’s environmental laws and, in the case of VW, a culture of corruption that enabled blatantly illegal conduct to persist over many years.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/statement-ag-schneiderman-fiat-chrysler>

January 11, 2017

### **Statement From A.G. Schneiderman On Volkswagen**

NEW YORK - Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman released the following statement regarding the settlement announced today between Volkswagen and the federal government. Last year, Attorney General Schneiderman announced a lawsuit against Volkswagen for selling cars equipped with illegal emissions control cheat devices and violating state environmental laws; that lawsuit is still pending.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/statement-ag-schneiderman-volkswagen-0>

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## NORTH CAROLINA

January 31, 2017

### **Don’t say “Yes” - Just hang up**

Sometimes all a crook needs from you is one word – “Yes.” With a tape recording of your voice saying it, a scammer can add charges to your phone bill or take other actions to steal your money. And when you protest that you never authorized the charges, that “yes” can make it harder to get the charges removed.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/Alerts/Don%E2%80%99t-say-Yes%E2%80%9D-Just-hang-up.aspx>

January 30, 2017

### **Protect Yourself Online**

Today, January 28, 2017, is national Data Privacy Day. This is an important day when we share information about how to protect your data online from fraud. As your Attorney General, protecting North Carolinians is my most important priority. Here are a few tips about how you can protect yourself:

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/Alerts/Protect-Yourself-Online.aspx>

January 06, 2017

### **Don't Be Scammed During Winter Weather**

RALEIGH, N.C. – The price gouging law that protects consumers from scammers is now in effect in all 100 North Carolina counties due to the winter storm state of emergency. Attorney General Josh Stein notified businesses and consumers today to be on the lookout for any issues...North Carolina has a strong statute against price gouging – charging too much during a time of crisis – that is tied directly to a declaration of a state of emergency. When Gov. Roy Cooper declared the state of emergency, that statute went into effect and will remain so until the state of emergency is ...

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Press-Releases/Don%E2%80%99t-Be-Scammed-During-Winter-Weather.aspx>

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## OHIO

January 30, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Warns of “Can You Hear Me” Calls Reported in Ohio**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) — Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today warned that since Friday, several Ohioans have reported suspicious calls from callers asking “Can you hear me?” Similar calls have been reported throughout the country as part of an alleged scam to trick consumers into responding “Yes” and using their response to place unauthorized charges on their phone or utility bill.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Warns-of-Can-You-Hear-Me%E2%80%9D>

January 27, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Issues Update on Identity Theft Unit**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ahead of Data Privacy Day (January 28), Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today issued an update on his office’s Identity Theft Unit, which helps victims correct the effects of identity theft. In 2016, the Ohio Attorney General’s Identity Theft Unit received 1,057 complaints and helped victims clear more than \$890,000 in fraudulent charges, according to complaint information.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/January-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Issues-Update-on-Identity>

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## OREGON

January 30, 2017

### **Data Privacy Day: Now is a good time to do something about protecting your personal information.**

Every year in late January, the National Cyber Security Alliance hosts Data Privacy Day, an international effort to create awareness about the importance of privacy and protecting personal information.

➤ *Original Press Release:* [http://www.doj.state.or.us/consumer/pdf/scam\\_alert\\_01-30-17.pdf](http://www.doj.state.or.us/consumer/pdf/scam_alert_01-30-17.pdf)

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## PENNSYLVANIA

January 05, 2017

### **Attorney General Beemer offers guide to consumers looking for health club memberships**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Bruce R. Beemer today encouraged Pennsylvanians to carefully examine any contract required by a fitness facility. The beginning of a new year is a time when many Commonwealth residents join gyms or health clubs as they seek to achieve their fitness goals.

➤ *Original Press Release:*  
[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=2969](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=2969)

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## SOUTH DAKOTA

January 19, 2017

### **Grandparent Scam Continues to Target South Dakota Seniors**

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley is again warning South Dakota seniors that the grandparent scam has resurfaced targeting all parts of the state. The scam begins with a telephone call from someone claiming to be a grandchild or other family member and requests money for a critical situation.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=1714>

January 12, 2017

### **Attorney General Jackley Warns Against Travel Scams and Timeshare Resellers**

PIERRE, S.D. – It is that time of year again when people are planning winter trips to warmer regions and may be faced with advertisements to buy a timeshare or travel package. Attorney General Jackley would like to offer some advice on how to better protect you when contemplating these types of purchases.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=1709>

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## VIRGINIA

January 06, 2017

### **PRICE GOUGING PROTECTIONS NOW IN EFFECT AHEAD OF WINTER STORM**

RICHMOND (January 06, 2017)- As Virginia prepares for an expected winter storm event, Governor McAuliffe's declaration of a state of emergency has triggered Virginia's anti-price gouging statutes designed to protect consumers from paying exorbitant prices for necessities during an emergency. Enacted in 2004, Virginia's Anti-Price Gouging Act prohibits a supplier from charging "unconscionable prices" for "necessary goods and services" during the thirty day period following a declared state of emergency. Items and services covered by these protections include but are not limited to water, ice, food, ...

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/860-january-6-2017-price-gouging-protections-now-in-effect-ahead-of-winter-storm>

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## WASHINGTON

January 23, 2017

### **Ferguson continues bipartisan push to raise tobacco sale age to 21**

OLYMPIA — Attorney General Bob Ferguson will continue his push to raise the legal age to purchase tobacco and vapor products to 21 tomorrow before the House Health Care & Wellness Committee. The Attorney General will testify on House Bill 1054 at the committee's hearing beginning at 8 a.m. on Tuesday. Ferguson's proposal is in its third year with bipartisan support. According a 2014 survey by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, about 95 percent of adult tobacco users start using before they turn 21.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/ferguson-continues-bipartisan-push-raise-tobacco-sale-age-21>

January 05, 2017

**AG Ferguson surpasses \$1 million in student-borrower recoveries**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Jan 5 2017

AG initiative to protect student borrowers includes bipartisan Student Loan Transparency Act  
OLYMPIA — Attorney General Bob Ferguson announced today that his office has recovered more than \$1.2 million in the last year cracking down on student loan debt adjusters who prey on borrowers. Ferguson also announced the introduction of bipartisan legislation to provide more transparency to students about their borrowing.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/ag-ferguson-surpasses-1-million-student-borrower-recoveries>*