

# THE STATE CENTER CONSUMER PROTECTION REPORT

March 2017

## About the State Center Consumer Protection Report

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**The Center for State Enforcement of Antitrust and Consumer Protection Laws** ("State Center") is pleased to present the latest edition of the State Center Consumer Protection Report ("Consumer Protection Report") Published 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.

- For more information on the State AG Consumer Protection Initiative, please visit our website: **[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 .....	5
ARIZONA .....	5
COLORADO.....	6
DELAWARE.....	7
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.....	7
FLORIDA .....	7
GEORGIA.....	8
IDAHO .....	8
ILLINOIS.....	8
IOWA.....	9
KANSAS.....	10
MAINE.....	11
MARYLAND .....	11
MASSACHUSETTS.....	12
MICHIGAN.....	14
NEVADA .....	14
NEW JERSEY .....	15
NEW YORK .....	16
NORTH CAROLINA.....	18
NORTH DAKOTA.....	19
OHIO .....	19
OKLAHOMA.....	21
OREGON.....	21
PENNSYLVANIA .....	22
VIRGINIA .....	22
VIRGINIA .....	23
Multistate Cases .....	24
Volkswagen Auto Group Emissions Settlement .....	24
Joint Investigation - Santander Consumer USA Holdings Sub-Prime Auto Loans .....	24
Federal Generic Drug Antitrust Lawsuit .....	25
Medicaid Fraud .....	26
Multistate .....	26

ALABAMA.....	26
ALASKA.....	26
ARKANSAS.....	27
FLORIDA .....	27
ILLINOIS.....	29
KANSAS .....	29
MISSISSIPPI .....	29
MISSOURI.....	30
NEW MEXICO .....	30
NEW YORK .....	30
OHIO .....	31
OKLAHOMA.....	31
Consumer Advocacy .....	32
Multistate Advocacy – Federal Protections for College Students .....	32
Multistate Advocacy - Department of Justice Action Regarding CFPB .....	32
Multistate Advocacy - Exxon Investigation .....	33
ALABAMA.....	33
ARIZONA .....	34
ARKANSAS.....	34
COLORADO.....	36
CONNECTICUT.....	36
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA .....	37
FLORIDA .....	38
GEORGIA .....	38
ILLINOIS.....	39
KANSAS .....	40
KANSAS .....	40
LOUISIANA .....	41
MASSACHUSETTS.....	42
MICHIGAN.....	43
MISSISSIPPI .....	43
MISSOURI.....	44
MONTANA .....	44

NEBRASKA..... 45  
NEVADA ..... 45  
NEW JERSEY ..... 47  
NEW MEXICO ..... 48  
NEW YORK ..... 50  
NORTH CAROLINA..... 52  
OHIO ..... 52  
OREGON..... 53  
PENNSYLVANIA ..... 53  
SOUTH DAKOTA ..... 55  
TEXAS..... 55  
UTAH..... 56  
VERMONT ..... 56  
VIRGINIA ..... 56  
WASHINGTON..... 57

## Consumer Protection Cases

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### ARIZONA

March 27, 2017

#### **\$60,000 in Restitution for Students Given Unaccredited Degrees & Medical Certifications**

PHOENIX- Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced students are eligible to receive up to \$60,000 in refunds after Para Health Professionals, Inc., and Examination Preparation Institute, Inc. issued unaccredited degrees and medical certifications. Students took seminars to become certified as Phlebotomists, Electrocardiogram Technicians, Medical Technicians, Behavioral Health Technicians, Healthcare Technicians, or Pharmacy Technicians. The restitution is part of a consent judgment obtained by the Attorney General's Office against Para Health Professionals and Examination Preparation Institute for violations of the Arizona Consumer Fraud Act.

- *Original Press Release: <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/60000-restitution-students-given-unaccredited-degrees-medical-certifications>*

March 21, 2017

#### **Suspected Fake Doctor Accused of Operating Illegal Medical Clinic**

PHOENIX – Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced a State Grand Jury indicted Craig Allen Scherf for allegedly operating illegal Botox and laser clinics in Tempe and Scottsdale. Scherf is not licensed by the Arizona Medical Board or by any other agency governing the practice of medicine in Arizona. Scherf has been charged with Fraudulent Schemes and Artifices, Fraudulent Schemes and Practices, Theft, Illegally Conducting an Enterprise, Taking the Identity of Another Person or Entity, 12 counts of Unlawful Practice of Medicine, and 12 counts of Endangerment. ...

- *Original Press Release: <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/suspected-fake-doctor-accused-operating-illegal-medical-clinic>*

March 07, 2017

#### **Owner of Real Estate Company Accused of Defrauding 40 Arizona Families**

PHOENIX - Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced a State Grand Jury indicted the owner of a Phoenix real estate company for allegedly stealing \$300,000 to \$500,000 from 40 families in Arizona....From 2013 to 2015, Francisco Aguirre owned Montecristo Properties, LLC, Montecristo Property Investments, LLC, and San Marino Property Investments, LLC. The indictment alleges Aguirre and his employees defrauded 40 families who wanted to buy homes. Aguirre allegedly made false statements and material omissions to families who believed they were purchasing homes from Aguirre and gave him a down payment.

- *Original Press Release: <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/owner-real-estate-company-accused-defrauding-40-arizona-families>*

March 01, 2017

**Former Investment Advisor Indicted**

PHOENIX - Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced a State Grand Jury indicted 57 year old former investment advisor Richard Mark Schmerman for his alleged misappropriation of over \$800,000 of his client's funds. Schmerman is facing charges of Fraudulent Schemes & Artifices, Theft, Forgery, & Criminal Impersonation. The Arizona Corporation Commission's Securities Division investigated and referred the case to the Arizona Attorney General's Office for prosecution.

- *Original Press Release: <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/former-investment-advisor-indicted>*

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COLORADO

March 27, 2017

**Logan County Man Receives 48 Year Prison Sentence for Securities Fraud**

Eddie Wayne Johnson of Sterling, Colorado was sentenced to a total of 48 years in the Department of Corrections with five years of mandatory parole following a jury conviction of seven counts of securities fraud and four counts of theft over \$20,000. The case was prosecuted by the Colorado Attorney General's Office following an investigation by the Colorado Division of Securities, part of the Department of Regulatory Agencies.

- *Original Press Release: <https://coag.gov/press-room/press-releases/03-27-17>*

March 23, 2017

**AG Coffman Obtains Preliminary Injunction Against Contractor who Allegedly Ripped Off Rural Coloradans**

DENVER- Today Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman announced that an El Paso County District Court Judge has granted the Attorney General's motion for a preliminary injunction against defendants Western Barn Company, LLC, Quality Barn Builders, LLC, Daryl Bruce Jurgens, Ryan Jurgens, Birgit Jurgens and Cynthia Jurgens. The injunction prohibits the defendants from engaging in any contractor-type business, including commercial and residential construction.

- *Original Press Release: <https://coag.gov/press-room/press-releases/03-23-17>*

March 08, 2017

**Former Jefferson County Deputy Sentenced to Six Years in Prison for Securities Fraud**

Colorado Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman, and the Colorado Division of Securities, part of the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA), today announced that former Jefferson County Sheriff's deputy Daniel Sullivan, 47, has been sentenced to six years in the Department of

Corrections followed by a mandatory five years of parole. The sentence came as a result of Sullivan's plea of guilty to one count of securities fraud, a class three felony, in December.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://coag.gov/press-room/press-releases/03-08-17>

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## DELAWARE

March 20, 2017

### **Two Newark Apartment Complexes Sued for Consumer Fraud**

The Delaware Department of Justice has filed suit against the owners and manager of two Newark apartment complexes for numerous violations of the Consumer Fraud Act. Attorney General Matt Denn announced the civil complaint filed in New Castle County Superior Court against Metrodev Newark, owners of the Autumn Park Apartments on Winterhaven Drive, Water Polo IV, owners of the Hidden Creek Commons on Hobart Drive, and the Metropolitan Management Group, the organization hired as property manager for the two complexes. ...

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://news.delaware.gov/2017/03/20/cfsuit/>

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## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

March 31, 2017

### **Attorney General Racine Asks Court to Hold Owners of Terrace Manor Complex in Contempt & Appoint Receiver for Property**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Attorney General Karl A. Racine announced that the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) has filed motions for contempt of court and receivership in its case against the owners of the Terrace Manor housing complex in Ward 8. The motions cite the failure of Sanford Capital and associated companies to abide by a court-ordered abatement plan the parties entered into in January, including neglecting to rectify dangerous violations of District's housing code cited by inspectors as much as a year ago.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-asks-court-hold-owners-terrace-manor-complex-contempt-appoint>

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## FLORIDA

March 20, 2017

### **Woman Arrested for Travel Fraud Scheme**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi's Office of Statewide Prosecution and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement today announced the arrest of Maria Constanza Shults



in connection with an organized travel fraud scheme operating in north and central Florida. According to the FDLE investigation, Shults, 62, of Jacksonville, operated an organized scheme defrauding a total of 27 known victims of more than \$100,000. Shults' scheme targeted Catholic parishioners by offering trips to holy sites.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/5F41D92C94B6155E852580E90057B4A4>

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## GEORGIA

March 28, 2017

**Over 10,000 Claim Forms Mailed to Consumers Eligible for Refunds in Western Sky Settlement**

ATLANTA, GA – Attorney General Chris Carr is notifying consumers that settlement administrator, Dahl Administration, LLC, recently mailed out 10,806 Notice and Claim Form packets to Georgia consumers who are eligible for refunds as a result of the Western Sky settlement. In order to receive their refunds, consumers should fill out and submit claim forms pursuant to the instructions provided by May 15, 2017.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2017-03-28/over-10000-claim-forms-mailed-consumers-eligible-refunds-western-sky>

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## IDAHO

March 20, 2017

**Wasden Announces Opinion on Proposed Sale of Lewiston Nonprofit Hospital**

(BOISE) - Attorney General Lawrence Wasden today announced the release of his opinion regarding the proposed sale of St. Joseph Regional Medical Center, a nonprofit hospital in Lewiston, to a for-profit subsidiary of Tennessee-based RCCH HealthCare Partners.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.ag.idaho.gov/media/newsReleases/2017/nr\\_03202017.html](http://www.ag.idaho.gov/media/newsReleases/2017/nr_03202017.html)

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## ILLINOIS

March 10, 2017

**ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN SEEKS PRISON TIME FOR EGREGIOUS & ILLEGAL DEBT COLLECTOR**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced charges against a Cook County

man for unauthorized debt collection practices in violation of a 2015 consent decree that banned him from operating a debt collection business in Illinois. Nelson Macwan, 46, of Glenview, was arraigned today on charges of indirect criminal contempt for wrongfully operating a debt collection business in Illinois. While engaged in the prohibited conduct, Macwan deposited over \$1.8 million into his business' bank accounts.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_03/20170310b.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_03/20170310b.html)

March 09, 2017

### **MADIGAN FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST ALTERNATIVE RETAIL ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER FOR DECEPTIVE MARKETING AND CONSUMER FRAUD**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a lawsuit against PALMco Power IL LLC (Palmco), an alternative retail electricity supplier (ARES), for misleading customers about the true cost of switching their electricity supply from ComEd or Ameren to Palmco. Madigan's lawsuit alleges that starting in at least January 2014, Palmco charged its customers rates consistently higher than ComEd or Ameren's rates after the introductory period ended. In fact, customers' rates increased dramatically after the expiration of the introductory rate to levels that were over 300 percent of what they would have paid if they had stayed with their utility.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_03/20170309.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_03/20170309.html)

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## IOWA

March 14, 2017

### **Attorney General Alleges "Dangerous" Consumer Fraud by Drinkable Sunscreen & Mosquito Repellent Marketers**

DES MOINES – Attorney General Tom Miller alleges the makers of "drinkable sunscreen" failed to prove their product provides the advertised protection against cancer-causing ultraviolet (UV) rays, in a consumer fraud lawsuit filed today in Polk County District Court. The lawsuit against Osmosis LLC and Harmonized Water LLC, and their owner, Benjamin Taylor Johnson, MD, all of Evergreen, Colorado, alleges the defendants initially marketed their "UV Neutralizer," proclaimed as the "world's first drinkable sunscreen," without any valid testing to prove its claims. The lawsuit also alleges the defendants later conducted "seriously flawed" testing that "recklessly gave consumers hollow assurances that they were protected from known health hazards."

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/attorney-general-alleges-dangerous-consumer-fraud-by-drinkable-sunscreen--mosquito-repellent-mark/>

March 01, 2017

### **Timber Buyers Barred from “Abusive and Deceptive” Conduct in Iowa Tree Harvests**

DES MOINES – Two timber buying companies—one from Illinois and one from Iowa—must reform their business practices in Iowa, through a court-approved agreement with Attorney General Tom Miller. The agreement follows complaints from elderly rural property owners. The agreement, through a consent judgment and injunction approved by Polk County District Court Judge Eliza Ovrom, resolves a consumer fraud investigation against Central Illinois Hardwood Inc., of Green Valley, IL, and Harvest Hardwood Inc., of Oskaloosa, Iowa. The consent judgment also names David Nash of Green Valley, owner of both companies; Richard Nash of Ramsey, Illinois; and Matt Groenendyk of Lovilia, Iowa, doing business as Buck Creek Timber and Veneer.

- *Original Press Release: <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/timber-buyers-barred-from-abusive-and-deceptive-conduct-in-iowa-tree-harvests/>*

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## KANSAS

March 29, 2017

### **Garden City medical provider permanently banned from providing medical services in Kansas**

GARDEN CITY – (March 29, 2017) – A Garden City physician assistant has been permanently banned from providing medical services in Kansas, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said today. Under the terms of a consent judgment approved today by Judge Michael Quint in Finney County District Court, Joel Erskin, who is part owner and operator of Renovo Medical LLC, and University Medical LLC, is permanently banned from engaging in any medical consumer transactions, providing any medical services or being employed by a provider of medical services.

- *Original Press Release: <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/03/29/garden-city-medical-provider-permanently-banned-from-providing-medical-services-in-kansas>*

March 24, 2017

### **AG Derek Schmidt: Arkansas pavers banned from doing business in Kansas**

TOPEKA – (March 24, 2017) – Two Arkansas men operating a paving business have been banned from doing business in Kansas and ordered to repay six Kansas consumers, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said today. Albert Jeffrey and Allen Jeffrey, of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, doing business as J. Boys Blacktop and Asphalt Paving, were ordered to repay a total of \$48,183 to consumers in Clay, Ottawa, Reno and Saline counties for violations of the Kansas Consumer Protection Act.

- *Original Press Release: <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/03/24/ag-derek-schmidt-arkansas-pavers-banned-from-doing-business-in-kansas>*

March 22, 2017

**AG Derek Schmidt: Topeka contractor temporarily banned from doing business in Kansas**

TOPEKA – (March 22, 2017) – A Topeka contractor has been prohibited from doing business in Kansas by temporary court order for violating the Kansas Consumer Protection Act and Kansas Roofing Registration Act, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said today. John Shively, dba J&R Remodeling, dba J&S Construction, Topeka, is temporarily banned from doing business in Kansas. Shawnee County District Judge Larry D. Hendricks entered a temporary restraining order on March 13 prohibiting Shively from acting as a roofing contractor in the state. The order was served on Shively last week.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/03/22/ag-derek-schmidt-topeka-contractor-temporarily-banned-from-doing-business-in-kansas>

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MAINE

March 02, 2017

**Consumers Impacted by Scams Utilizing Western Union May Be Eligible for Restitution Payments**

AUGUSTA – Attorney General Janet Mills requests all Mainers who were scammed out of money and asked to utilize Western Union as a payment method to contact her office as they may be eligible for restitution payments. Under a recent settlement with the federal government consumers may be eligible for some restitution if the payments were sent between 1/1/2004 and 1/19/17. In January, the Federal Trade Commission announced a settlement it made with Western Union that will require them to return \$586 million dollars through a claims settlement process to consumers.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.maine.gov/ag/news/article.shtml?id=732472>

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MARYLAND

March 30, 2017

**Attorney General Frosh Announces Settlement of Price-Fixing Lawsuit Against Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.**

BALTIMORE, MD (March 30, 2017)–Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today announced the settlement of a price-fixing lawsuit against Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. (Johnson & Johnson), alleging that Johnson & Johnson agreed with retailers in 2014 to fix the price of Johnson & Johnson brand contact lenses, like Acuvue®. Under that pricing policy, no retailer was permitted to sell Johnson & Johnson brand contact lenses below an allegedly agreed-upon

minimum price. An agreement between a manufacturer and retailer to set a minimum retail price is a violation of Maryland antitrust law.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/033017.pdf>

March 30, 2017

**Baltimore-Area Investment Adviser Known for Infomercials Barred from Investment Advisory Business**

BALTIMORE, MD (March 30, 2017) –Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that his Securities Division prevailed in the administrative proceeding seeking to shut down the investment advisory operations of Towson-based Everest Wealth Management, Inc. and Everest Investment Advisors, Inc. (EIA) based on allegations of fraud and Maryland securities law violations. The Final Order issued in the matter revokes Rousseaux’s investment adviser representative registration, bars Rousseaux and Everest Wealth Management from the securities and investment advisory business, suspends Everest Investment Advisors’ investment adviser registration for one year, and imposes fines totaling \$255,000.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/033017a.pdf>

March 16, 2017

**AG Frosh Secures Settlement with Debt Settlement Companies that Charged Consumers Thousands without Providing Services**

Baltimore, MD (March 16, 2017)–Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that his Consumer Protection Division entered into a settlement with five California law firms and their owner, Mandip Purewal, to resolve allegations that the companies collected illegal advance fees from consumers for debt settlement services, and then failed to reduce consumers’ debts.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/031617.pdf>

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## MASSACHUSETTS

March 28, 2017

**Falmouth Man Sentenced to Three to Five Years in State Prison in Connection with Construction Machinery Scheme**

BOSTON – A Falmouth man has been sentenced to three to five years in state prison in connection with a construction machinery scheme through which he stole money from customers, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today. Judge Christine Roach followed the recommendation of the AG’s Office and sentenced Dennis Desgroseilliers, age 69, to three

to five years in state prison followed by five years of probation...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/falmouth-man-sentenced.html>

March 27, 2017

### **Real Estate Broker Indicted for Stealing \$464,000 from Homeowners**

BOSTON – A real estate broker has been indicted on additional charges in connection with stealing more than \$464,000 through a larceny scheme targeting homeowners facing foreclosure, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/real-estate-broker-indicted.htm>

March 17, 2017

### **Couple Ordered to Pay \$13.5 Million for Deceptive Marketing of Treatments at Unlicensed Medical Clinic in Framingham**

BOSTON – Two individuals have been ordered to pay \$13.5 million for the deceptive marketing of medications and services relating to the treatment of erectile dysfunction at an unlicensed medical clinic in Framingham, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today. The judgment also orders preventive measures to ensure future compliance with the law. Pursuant to the Suffolk Superior Court judgment, Kevin Hornsby, M.D., was ordered to pay \$11 million in civil penalties and his wife, Heidi Hornsby, was ordered to pay \$2.5 million.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/couple-ordered-to-pay-13-5-million-for-deceptive-marketing.html>

March 06, 2017

### **Lowell Tax Preparer Ordered to Stop Doing Business After Being Sued for Defrauding Clients, Keeping Refunds**

BOSTON – As Massachusetts residents prepare their tax returns this tax season, Attorney General Maura Healey has stopped a Lowell tax preparer from doing business after he allegedly defrauded clients by filing tax returns containing inflated and falsified information on their behalf and keeping the artificially inflated portions of the refunds. A request for a preliminary injunction was granted last week in Middlesex Superior Court against Samuel M. Dangaiso and his unregistered company, Tax Enterprises, based in Lowell.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/lowell-tax-preparer-ordered-to-stop-doing-business.html>

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## MICHIGAN

March 09, 2017

### **Schuette Files Cease and Desist After Veterans Charity Admits to Lying to Donors about Helping Michigan Vets**

LANSING — Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today announced a Notice of Intended Action and Cease and Desist Order against VietNow National Headquarters, Inc., an Illinois-based charity, for allegedly violating the Charitable Organizations and Solicitations Act. Violations include deceptive solicitations and spending donations improperly. The Attorney General's Charitable Trust Section investigated the truthfulness of VietNow's solicitations which stated that money would benefit Michigan veterans and in response to the Attorney General's inquires, VietNow admitted that it had not funded any programs that assisted Michigan veterans. Other scripts claimed that VietNow provided "medical facilities and treatment" to veterans, but VietNow's response identified no such programs.

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-406794--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-406794--,00.html)

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## NEVADA

March 17, 2017

### **Attorney General Laxalt Announces Grand Jury Indictment against Two Defendants for eBay Scam**

Las Vegas, NV – Today, Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt announced that John Lubera, 31, and Joseph Lubera, 21, both of Las Vegas, were indicted by the Clark County Grand Jury on nine felony charges for their roles in an eBay scam. John Lubera was charged with five felonies including four counts of theft in the amount of \$650 or more, a category "C" felony, and one count of multiple transactions of fraud and deceit in course of enterprise or occupation, a category "B" felony....

- **Original Press Release:** [http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt\\_Announces\\_Grand\\_Jury\\_Indictment\\_against\\_Two\\_Defendants\\_for\\_eBay\\_Scam/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney_General_Laxalt_Announces_Grand_Jury_Indictment_against_Two_Defendants_for_eBay_Scam/)

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## NEW JERSEY

March 28, 2017

### **New Jersey Bureau of Securities Assesses \$1 Million in Civil Penalties Against Essex County Resident and His Company for Defrauding Investors through a Ponzi Scheme Involving the Fraudulent Sale of Unregistered Securities**

NEWARK - The New Jersey Bureau of Securities today ordered Edge Trading, LLC (“Edge Trading”) and its president, Mark J. Moskowitz, to pay a \$1 million civil penalty for selling unregistered fraudulent securities and misusing at least \$440,000 of investors’ funds for personal expenses, including mortgage payments on his home, entertainment, shopping, and dining out. The Millburn resident misled eight investors – including three from New Jersey – into buying unregistered securities, primarily in the form of purported limited partnerships in Edge Trading.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170328b.html>

March 23, 2017

### **General Manager of Bergen County Used Car Dealership Sentenced to 10 Years in Prison for Key Role in \$1.4 Million Auto Loan Scam**

TRENTON – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor (OIFP) announced today that the manager of a now-defunct Bergen County used car dealership was sentenced to 10 years in prison for his role as “point man” in a bank financing scam that netted \$1.4 million in fraudulent loans for luxury cars. Hector Marquez, the general manager of D.I.B Leasing in Teterboro, was also ordered to pay \$110,370 in restitution under the sentence handed down yesterday by Superior Court Judge Susan Steele in Bergen County.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170323b.html>

March 13, 2017

### **New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs Files Complaint Against Ocean County Contractor Alleging Fraud In Connection with Rebuilding and Repair of Sandy-Damaged Homes**

NEWARK – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the Division of Consumer Affairs have filed a complaint alleging that a contractor doing business in Ocean County used deceptive practices to obtain more than \$750,000 in federal relief funds from 14 homeowners who sought to have their damaged homes rebuilt, elevated and/or repaired after Superstorm Sandy.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170313b.html>

March 03, 2017

### **Eight Indicted on First-Degree Conspiracy, Racketeering and Money Laundering Charges for Allegedly Defrauding Investors of \$7 Million**

TRENTON –Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino announced that eight people were indicted today on first-degree charges of conspiracy, racketeering and money laundering for allegedly



defrauding 26 investors of more than \$7 million through two successive scams involving sales of bogus investments. After the first scam, two defendants – George Bussanich Sr. and George Bussanich Jr. – agreed to pay \$5.5 million, including \$4 million in investor restitution, to settle a suit filed by the New Jersey Bureau of Securities, but they then allegedly proceeded to defraud 15 of the same investors in a second scam.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170303a.html>

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## NEW YORK

March 31, 2017

### **Statement From A.G. Schneiderman On Trump University Settlement**

“Today's final approval by a judge of our Trump University settlement will provide relief – and hopefully much-needed closure – to the victims of Donald Trump's fraudulent university. Trump University's victims waited years for compensation, while President Trump refused to settle and fought us every step of the way - until his stunning reversal last fall.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/statement-ag-schneiderman-trump-university-settlement>

March 23, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Settlements With Three Mobile Health Application Developers For Misleading Marketing And Privacy Practices**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced settlements with three popular health-related applications sold in Apple's App Store and Google Play regarding misleading claims and irresponsible privacy practices. The settlement follows a year-long investigation of mobile health applications and requires the implicated companies and developers to amend deceptive statements about their apps and modify their privacy policies to better protect consumers, while also making clear that their apps are not medical devices and are not approved by the U.S Food and Drug Administration.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-settlements-three-mobile-health-application-developers>

March 22, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces \$540K Settlement With Retailer For Defrauding Over 250 Soldiers In NYS**

WATERTOWN – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced that his office has secured a \$540,000 settlement with Freedom Stores, Inc., and Freedom Acceptance Corp. (collectively, “Freedom Stores”) a now-defunct retailer and financing firm based in Norfolk, Virginia, after the companies fraudulently charged hundreds of New York servicemembers who purchased consumer goods from Freedom Stores. The Attorney General's settlement will clear

debt and judgments fraudulently charged to hundreds of New York soldiers at various locations across the United States.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-540k-settlement-retailer-defrauding-over-250-soldiers-nys>

March 16, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Sentencing Of Albany Insurance Broker In \$1M Securities Fraud Scheme**

ALBANY COUNTY – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced today that Lawrence D. Rosenbaum, 65, of Albany, was sentenced today on multiple crimes in connection with a sweeping indictment charging him with fraudulently soliciting over \$1 million from numerous investors in a securities fraud scheme between 2006 and 2012.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-sentencing-albany-insurance-broker-1m-securities-fraud>

March 16, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces \$185K Suit Against Watkins Glen-Area Vacation Rental Owner Who Allegedly Defrauded Consumers**

BINGHAMTON – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced today that his office has filed legal action against Henry Dean and his company, FLGH, LLC, seeking a permanent injunction prohibiting them from operating their vacation rental home business, which they advertise as being available to the general public. The case also seeks restitution of \$102,694.88 for consumers who paid Dean in advance rental fees for a Town of Orange property that was uninhabitable, as well as over \$85,000 in civil penalties and costs.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-185k-suit-against-watkins-glen-area-vacation-rental-owner>

March 10, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Sues Hudson Valley Heating Oil Company For Defrauding Consumers**

NEW YORK - Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced a lawsuit against Champion Fuel and Service Corp., its owners David DeSilva Sr. and Patrick Terminello, and Mr. DeSilva's son, David DeSilva Jr., who managed the company. The suit, filed in State Supreme Court in White Plains, charges that the company engaged in persistent fraudulent, illegal and deceptive conduct in connection with the operation of the Wappingers Falls-based home heating oil business and seeks nearly \$83,000 in restitution for over 80 consumers. The company is no longer in business.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-sues-hudson-valley-heating-oil-company-defrauding-consumers>

March 03, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Felony Charges Against Tech Firm And Former Chief Executive Officer For Alleged Securities Fraud Scheme**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced today the unsealing of a multi-count indictment charging Freevi Corp., d/b/a Sungame Corp. (“Sungame”), and former Sungame Chief Executive Officer Neil Chandran in an alleged scheme to steal hundreds of thousands of dollars from unwitting investors by soliciting investments in computer tablets which supposedly were able to display content in 3D. Sungame is a publicly-traded Las Vegas, Nevada-based technology firm trading under symbol “SGMZ”.

- *Original Press Release:* <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-felony-charges-against-tech-firm-and-former-chief-executive>

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## NORTH CAROLINA

March 27, 2017

### **AG Josh Stein Fights to Protect Student Borrowers**

RALEIGH, NC – Attorney General Josh Stein today announced that he has resolved a lawsuit against Student Loan Group, a student loan debt relief scam. Student Loan Group claimed it could reduce a borrower’s student loan debt but instead illegally charged large upfront fees and failed to perform expert services. “Thanks to this action, Student Loan Group will refund more than \$375,000 to 377 borrowers it scammed,” said AG Stein. “Students across North Carolina with significant education debt deserve effective protection against fraud. It is illegal to charge borrowers an up-front fee for these services, and my office will not let it happen unchecked.”

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/AG-Josh-Stein-Fights-to-Protect-Student-Borrowers.aspx>

March 10, 2017

### **AG Stein Announces \$273,000 Settlement with Pharmaceutical and Laboratory Companies**

RALEIGH - Attorney General Josh Stein announced today that North Carolina has settled allegations against Forest Laboratories LLC, and Forest Pharmaceuticals Inc., (“Forest”). Forest violated the anti-kickback statute, which prohibits providing payment and rewards to induce referrals of items or services covered by federal health care programs. These incentives include providing payments and meals to physicians in connection with speaker programs about Bystolic®, Savella®, or Namenda®, between January 1, 2008 and December 31, 2011.

- *Original Press Release:* [http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Press-Releases/AG-Stein-Announces-\\$273,000-Settlement-with-Pharma.aspx](http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Press-Releases/AG-Stein-Announces-$273,000-Settlement-with-Pharma.aspx)

March 09, 2017

### **AG Stein Announces Settlement of Lawsuit against Firm for Illegal Debt Relief Scheme**

RALEIGH – AG Josh Stein today announced that a court ruled in the AG office’s favor against an illegal debt relief scheme. Orion Processing, Swift Rock Financial, and World Law South – which did business under the name “World Law” -- falsely offered to assist consumers with debt relief and requested advance payment of fees for their services. This activity is illegal in North Carolina. World Law claimed to help consumers resolve their credit card debts through settlements with consumers’ creditors, but very rarely did.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/AG-Stein-Announces-Settlement-of-Lawsuit-against-F.aspx>

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## NORTH DAKOTA

March 07, 2017

### **CONSUMER FRAUD JUDGMENT ISSUES AGAINST WAYNE J. DELORME, JR.**

BISMARCK, ND – The Consumer Protection division sued Wayne Joseph Delorme, Jr., doing business as 3D Home Improvements, for violations of the consumer fraud and contractor licensing laws. Delorme solicited advance payments totaling more than \$20,000 from at least nine individuals but did not perform any work or provide the materials that were supposed to have been purchased with the advance payments, and did not issue refunds. Delorme has never had a contractor’s license.

- *Original Press Release:* <https://attorneygeneral.nd.gov/news/consumer-fraud-judgment-issues-against-wayne-j-delorme-jr>

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## OHIO

March 17, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Seeks Consumer Restitution from Youngstown-Area Contractor for Failure to Deliver**

(YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against a home improvement contractor accused of failing to deliver promised services to northeast Ohio consumers. The lawsuit accuses Anthony J. Luttrell and Falcon General Contractors LLC of violating Ohio’s Consumer Sales Practices Act. In the lawsuit, the Attorney General seeks reimbursement for affected consumers and an injunction to prevent further violations.

- *Original Press Release:* [http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/March-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Seeks-Consumer-Restitu-\(1\)](http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/March-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Seeks-Consumer-Restitu-(1))

March 08, 2017

### **Northeast Ohio Home Improvement Contractor Accused of Failing to Deliver Promised Services**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against a home improvement contractor accused of failing to deliver promised services to northeast Ohio consumers. Clinton A. Matthews, of Canton, and his business Matthews Home Services LLC are accused of violating Ohio’s Consumer Sales Practices Act.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/March-2017/Northeast-Ohio-Home-Improvement-Contractor-Accused>*

March 07, 2017

### **AG DeWine Announces Charitable Law Settlement with Organization that Operated in Toledo and Columbus**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)— Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a settlement with the operator of “Teens With Dreams,” an organization that operated around Toledo and Columbus and collected money through door-to-door solicitations by kids. An investigation by the Ohio Attorney General’s Charitable Law Section found that much of the money collected by Teens With Dreams went to the organization’s founder, Darnell Robinson, and that there was little evidence to suggest that any charitable programming actually occurred. Under the settlement, Robinson agrees to dissolve Teens With Dreams and to never again incorporate or create an Ohio nonprofit organization.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/March-2017/AG-DeWine-Announces-Charitable-Law-Settlement-with>*

March 03, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Announces Consumer Protection Action Against Columbus Area Contractor**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against a Columbus home improvement contractor accused of failing to provide promised services to consumers in central Ohio. The lawsuit accuses Midwest Construction Services and Roofing LLC, Jason Hauser, and William Williams of violating Ohio’s Consumer Sales Practices Act and Home Solicitation Sales Act. 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/March-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Announces-Consumer-Protect>*

March 01, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Seeks Consumer Restitution from Pest Control Operator**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against an Ohio man for failing to deliver promised animal removal and pest control services to consumers in central Ohio. Daniel Pavlov, doing business as A Wildlife Wrangler, is accused of

violating Ohio's Consumer Sales Practices Act and Home Solicitation Sales Act. In the lawsuit, 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/March-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Seeks-Consumer-Restitution>

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## OKLAHOMA

March 02, 2017

### **Attorney General Mike Hunter Announces Embezzlement Charges Involving Cemetery Monuments**

OKLAHOMA CITY – Attorney General Mike Hunter on Thursday announced embezzlement charges alleging that customers were defrauded of money intended for construction of cemetery monuments. After receiving several complaints, the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit conducted an investigation ...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.ok.gov/triton/modules/newsroom/newsroom\\_article.php?id=258&article\\_id=29574](https://www.ok.gov/triton/modules/newsroom/newsroom_article.php?id=258&article_id=29574)

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## OREGON

March 16, 2017

### **AG Rosenblum Settles with Vitamin Shoppe over Dietary Supplements**

Vitamin Shoppe will pay Oregon \$545,000, ban DMAA, Picamillon and other illegal supplements from Oregon stores Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum today announced a \$545,000 settlement with the nutritional supplement chain Vitamin Shoppe Inc. that will prohibit the company from selling dietary supplements with illegal or unsafe ingredients. Under the settlement, Vitamin Shoppe is prohibited from selling any dietary supplement after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued written notice that the product contains an ingredient that is unlawful or unsafe. In addition, Vitamin Shoppe may not sell DMAA, picamillon, and other unlawful ingredients in Oregon.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.doj.state.or.us/releases/Pages/2017/rel031617.aspx>

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## PENNSYLVANIA

March 10, 2017

### **Two Philadelphia men found guilty of swindling senior citizen in “Grandparent Scam”**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced a Philadelphia jury has found two men guilty of swindling thousands of dollars from an elderly victim through a hoax known as the “Grandparent Scam.” The case began following a complaint from the victim, who was scammed after receiving a phone call indicating his grandson needed bail money for a drunken driving arrest. Spencer Compas, 31, and Witson Lavilette, 40, were found guilty Thursday afternoon following a four-day trial.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=3085](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=3085)

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## VIRGINIA

March 10, 2017

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL HERRING REACHES SETTLEMENTS WITH TWO FREDERICKSBURG-AREA PAWNBROKERS**

RICHMOND (March 10, 2017) - Attorney General Mark Herring announced today that his office has reached settlements with Pawnking, LLC and All Star Pawn & Gold, LLC, two affiliated Fredericksburg-area pawnbrokers, to provide more than \$62,000 in refunds to more than 1,000 consumers to resolve allegations that the companies charged illegal interest and fees in violation of Virginia's pawnbroker statutes and the Virginia Consumer Protection Act. "In recent years we have seen a rash of pawnbrokers around Virginia skirting laws and overcharging consumers," said Attorney General Herring. "If you're considering using a pawn shop or other small dollar loan lender, you should always closely review the terms and know your rights before signing anything that might result in even more money coming out of your pocket."

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/904-march-10-2017-herring-reaches-settlements-with-two-fredericksburg-area-pawnbrokers>

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## VIRGINIA

March 09, 2017

### **DOOR-TO-DOOR MEAT SALES COMPANY SETTLES WITH COMMONWEALTH**

RICHMOND (March 9, 2017) - Attorney General Mark R. Herring announced today that he has reached a settlement with Capital Meats, Inc., a wholesale meat seller formerly based in Frederick County, to resolve allegations that the company violated the Virginia Consumer Protection Act by misleading customers about its products and violated the Virginia Home Solicitation Sales Act by failing to provide customers with a proper notice about their right to cancel a sale within three days and by making it more difficult for customers to cancel their order within the three day "cooling off" period required by law.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/903-march-9-2017-door-to-door-meat-sales-company-settles-with-commonwealth>*

March 06, 2017

### **HOBBY LOBBY TO CHANGE ADVERTISING PRACTICES AS PART OF SETTLEMENT**

RICHMOND (March 6, 2017) - Attorney General Mark Herring has reached a settlement with arts and crafts store Hobby Lobby concerning its advertising practices and alleged violations of the Comparison Price Advertising Act and the Virginia Consumer Protection Act. In a complaint filed simultaneously with the settlement, Attorney General Herring alleged that Hobby Lobby routinely advertised discounts compared to "other sellers," but failed to disclose what its prices were actually being compared to as required by law, making it more difficult for customers to figure out if they were actually getting a good price.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/900-march-6-2017-hobby-lobby-to-change-advertising-practices-as-part-of-settlement>*

March 06, 2017

### **CONSUMERS TO RECEIVE REFUNDS UNDER SETTLEMENT WITH RICHMOND TIRE SHOP OVER "BAIT AND SWITCH" ADVERTISING**

RICHMOND(March 6, 2017) - Attorney General Mark R. Herring announced today that he has reached a settlement with Shockoe Bottom Automotive & Tires, Inc., a Richmond-based seller of tires and alignment services, for alleged violations of the Virginia Consumer Protection Act and the Commonwealth's "bait and switch" statute. In his lawsuit filed in June 2016, Attorney General Herring alleged that Shockoe Bottom Automotive (which also goes by "Shockoe Bottom Tires" and "Emerald Tires") advertised price deals for tires and alignment services on its website and storefront that it refused to honor with its customers.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/898-march-6-2017-richmond-tire-shop-to-issue-refunds-under-settlement-regarding-bait-and-switch-advertising>*



## Multistate Cases

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### Volkswagen Auto Group Emissions Settlement

**Date:** March 31, 2017

**Details:** Volkswagen AG, Audi AG and Porsche AG, as well as their American subsidiaries, have agreed to pay over \$157 million to ten states to settle the environmental lawsuits first filed last summer by New York and Massachusetts challenging the companies' secret use of unlawful "defeat device" software in their vehicles – software that caused tens of thousands of tons of excess harmful pollutants to be emitted into the air in New York and other states. The settlement marks the first time New York and the other settling states – all of which have adopted California's stringent vehicle emission standards – have secured environmental penalties from an automobile manufacturer under their own state auto emissions laws.

*Example Press Release:* <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-volkswagen-pay-new-york-325-million-marking-first-ever-ny>

**Files:** Settlement document can be found at:  
[https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/vw\\_settlement\\_agreement-execution\\_copy\\_with\\_signatures.pdf](https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/vw_settlement_agreement-execution_copy_with_signatures.pdf)

**States:** 10 states known as "Section 177" states that have adopted California's stringent vehicle emission standards: Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maine, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington

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### Joint Investigation - Santander Consumer USA Holdings Sub-Prime Auto Loans

**Date:** March 29, 2017

**Details:** Following an investigation by the Delaware and Massachusetts Attorney General offices into the financing and securitization of sub-prime auto loans, Santander Consumer USA Holdings, Inc. has agreed to pay up to \$2.875 million to harmed Delaware consumers. The investigation, conducted by the Fraud Division of Attorney General Matt Denn's Office in partnership with the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, revealed that Santander allegedly funded auto loans without having a reasonable basis to believe that the borrowers could afford them. In fact, Santander predicted that a large portion of the loans would default, and allegedly knew that the reported incomes, which were used to support the loan applications submitted to the company by car dealers, were incorrect and often inflated.

*Example Press Release: <http://news.delaware.gov/2017/03/29/sc-2/>*

**Files:** *Delaware Cease and Desist, <http://news.delaware.gov/files/2017/03/2017-3-29.SC-executed-CD.pdf>*

**States:** Delaware and Massachusetts

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## Federal Generic Drug Antitrust Lawsuit

**Date:** March 01, 2017

**Details:** Attorney General George Jepsen announced today that Connecticut has filed an amended antitrust complaint in federal court that increases from 20 to 40 the number of states alleging that six generic drug-makers entered into illegal conspiracies in order to unreasonably restrain trade, artificially inflate and manipulate prices and reduce competition in the United States for two generic drugs. The amended complaint also adds claims of alleged violations of state antitrust laws – in addition to the alleged violations of federal antitrust laws – in each of the 40 states, as well as state consumer protection laws in most of the states, against the defendant generic companies Heritage Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Aurobindo Pharma USA, Inc., Citron Pharma, LLC, Mayne Pharma (USA), Inc., Mylan Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and Teva Pharmaceuticals USA, Inc.

*Example Press Release: <http://www.ct.gov/ag/cwp/view.asp?Q=590616&A=2341>*

**Files:** *Redacted Amended Complaint:*

*[http://www.ct.gov/ag/lib/ag/press\\_releases/2017/20170301\\_genericdrugs\\_firstamendedcomplaint\\_redacted.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/ag/lib/ag/press_releases/2017/20170301_genericdrugs_firstamendedcomplaint_redacted.pdf)*

**States:** 40 States, led by Connecticut, including Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

## Medicaid Fraud

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### Multistate

March 09, 2017

#### **New Report Highlights More than \$165 Million in MFCU Recoveries**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—A newly released report shows Attorney General Pam Bondi’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit is recovering millions of lost Medicaid dollars. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General report highlights more than \$165 million in recoveries by the MFCU during federal fiscal year 2015-2016. “My Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigators work tirelessly to stop Medicaid fraud and recover stolen funds for taxpayers,” said Attorney General Bondi. “This report sends the strong message that we will continue to aggressively pursue anyone trying to defraud Florida’s Medicaid program.”

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/08BCF58997746CE9852580DE0077B889>

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### ALABAMA

March 09, 2017

#### **AG MARSHALL ANNOUNCES ARREST OF BALDWIN COUNTY WOMAN FOR EXPLOITATION OF MOBILE NURSING FACILITY RESIDENT**

Attorney General Steven T. Marshall announced the arrest of Tawny Pahoresky King, 34, of Fairhope, for the financial exploitation of a Mobile nursing home resident. King surrendered this morning to the Baldwin County Sheriff’s Office. The Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) presented evidence to a Baldwin County grand jury resulting in an indictment dated February 17 charging King with first-degree financial exploitation of an elderly person.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ago.state.al.us/News-1010>

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### ALASKA

March 09, 2017

#### **Assisted Living Home Owner, Three Managers, and Corporation Indicted for Defrauding the Alaska Medicaid Program**

Yesterday, a grand jury in Anchorage indicted 75 year old Margret Williams of Anchorage, owner of Flamingo Eye, LLC Assisted Living Home on three felony counts of Medical Assistance

Fraud, one count of Scheme to Defraud, and one count of Evidence Tampering. The grand jury also indicted 45 year old Donald Kallon of England, 34 year old Princess Turay of Anchorage, and Flamingo Eye, LLC on the same five counts. Fifty-eight year old Wilson Esapa of Anchorage was indicted on a single count of evidence tampering. The above individuals were also alleged to have committed numerous misdemeanor offenses for knowingly falsifying medical records.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://law.alaska.gov/press/releases/2017/030917-FlamingoEyeLLC.html>

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## ARKANSAS

March 08, 2017

### **Mother, Daughter Arrested for Medicaid Fraud in Faulkner Co.**

LITTLE ROCK , Ark. (News release) – Two Faulkner County women, a mother and daughter, have been arrested for Medicaid fraud, Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge said. Vonita G. Herbert, 28, of Conway, and her mother, Juanita Faye Rowden, 49, of Greenbrier, were arrested and charged with Medicaid fraud, a Class B felony. They are accused of billing \$2,639.70 for services not rendered to an 89-year-old woman who was bedridden. In addition, they were both charged with Abuse of Adults – Neglect Causing Serious Physical Injury of Substantial Risk of Death, a Class D felony.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/latest-news/mother-daughter-arrested/>

March 03, 2017

### **Bay woman fined after pleading guilty to Medicaid fraud**

JONESBORO, AR (KAIT) -

A Bay woman pleaded guilty Thursday to Medicaid fraud. Hannah Riggs, 24, pleaded guilty in Pulaski County Circuit Court and was sentenced to pay a \$17,564.88 fine to the Arkansas General Fund and \$5,854.96 in restitution to the Arkansas Medicaid Program. She was also ordered to pay court costs.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/latest-news/bay-woman-pleaded-guilty-to-fraud/>

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## FLORIDA

March 31, 2017

### **Former Home Healthcare Employee Arrested for Medicaid Fraud**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and the Daytona Police Department today arrested a Flagler County resident for more than \$2,000 in

Medicaid fraud. Ruth Sylvester Marsh, 56, is a former provider of homemaker and in home support services. According to the MFCU investigation, Marsh submitted service logs for services not provided. Marsh allegedly billed for services performed at times the recipient traveled out of town or was with family. Additionally, Marsh's service logs reflect some of the same dates and times Marsh worked at a school as a teacher's aide.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/2D29F404096FA142852580F40072AFC5>

March 30, 2017

**Florida Couple Arrested in Drug Diversion Scheme**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement today announced the arrest of a Naples couple in connection with a drug diversion scheme fueled by Medicaid fraud. According to the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and FDLE investigation, Francisco Calderon, 53, and his wife Zulima Calderon, 51, trafficked more than \$3.9 million of contraband prescription drugs between 2005 and 2013.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/A29CD929C07BBA70852580F3006B6D21>

March 17, 2017

**Three Arrested in Medicaid Fraud Scheme Targeting Homeless**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, the Kissimmee Police Department, the Orlando Police Department and the Osceola County Sheriff's Office announced the arrests of three individuals for allegedly defrauding the Medicaid program out of more than \$10,000.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/678B3595D8234AE2852580E6005B1BC0>

March 07, 2017

**Certified Nursing Assistant Arrested for Abuse of a Disabled Adult**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and the Baker County Sheriff's Office today arrested a certified nursing assistant for abuse of a disabled adult. Emily S. Martin, 21, is a Baker County resident formerly employed as a CNA at Northeast Florida State Hospital. According to the MFCU investigation, Martin grabbed and shoved a disabled patient at Northeast Florida State Hospital in a forceful manner, inflicting physical harm on the victim.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/001CD4F7B97EA8A3852580DC00703843>

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## ILLINOIS

March 03, 2017

### **MADIGAN: METRO EAST RESIDENTS CHARGED WITH MEDICAID FRAUD**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan and the Illinois State Police (ISP) today announced that three Metro East residents have been charged with Medicaid fraud for conspiring to bill the state of Illinois for more than \$151,000 in personal assistance services that were not provided.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_03/20170303.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_03/20170303.html)

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## KANSAS

March 30, 2017

### **Kansas City man found guilty of Medicaid fraud**

KANSAS CITY – (March 30, 2017) – A Kansas City, Kan. man was found guilty of Medicaid fraud by a Wyandotte County jury, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said. Jasmon Watson, 33, was found guilty this week of one count of Medicaid fraud by a Wyandotte County jury in an amount greater than \$1,000 but less than \$25,000. Restitution will be determined at sentencing. The jury was unable to reach a decision on a theft charge. Judge Bill L. Klapper presided over the jury trial.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/03/30/kansas-city-man-found-guilty-of-medicaid-fraud>

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## MISSISSIPPI

March 01, 2017

### **Flowood Healthcare Agency Personal Care Assistant Arrested for Medicaid Fraud**

Attorney General Jim Hood announced today that a Flowood personal care assistant has been arrested for Medicaid fraud following her indictment by a Rankin County grand jury. Shanika Sherese Keys, 37, of Meridian, turned herself in to authorities Monday. Keys is charged with one count of Medicaid Fraud. Keys was booked into the Rankin County jail and released on a \$5,000 bond.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ago.state.ms.us/releases/flowood-healthcare-agency-personal-care-assistant-arrested-for-medicaid-fraud/>

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## MISSOURI

March 30, 2017

### **AG Hawley Announces St. Francois County Medicaid Fraud Conviction**

Jefferson City, Mo. – On March 23, 2017, a St. Francois County jury found Christina Halter, 52, guilty of one count of Medicaid Fraud, two counts of financial exploitation, one count of obstructing a Medicaid Fraud investigation, one count of failing to file an income tax return, one count of failing to pay income tax, and one count of attempting to evade income tax liability.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2017-news-archives/ag-hawley-announces-st.-francois-county-medicaid-fraud-conviction>

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## NEW MEXICO

March 16, 2017

### **AG Balderas Announces \$6.2 Million Recovered by the Medicaid Fraud and Elder Abuse Division, a Medicaid Fraud Control Unit**

Santa Fe, NM – Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas announced that the Office of the Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud and Elder Abuse Division, a Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, recovered over \$6 million last year.

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas\\_Announces\\_%246.2\\_Million\\_Recovered\\_by\\_the\\_Medicaid\\_Fraud\\_and\\_Elder\\_Abuse\\_Division.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas_Announces_%246.2_Million_Recovered_by_the_Medicaid_Fraud_and_Elder_Abuse_Division.pdf)

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## NEW YORK

March 07, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Indictment Of Queens Woman Charged With Stealing The Identities Of Three Nursing Home Residents**

NEW YORK— Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced the indictment and arraignment of Channel Francis, 40, of Rosedale, on charges related to her fraudulent use of credit cards in the names of three elderly residents of the Parker Jewish Institute for Health Care and Rehabilitation in Queens.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-indictment-queens-woman-charged-stealing-identities-three>

March 02, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces \$7.9 Million Settlement And State Prison Sentences In Major Illegal Prescription Buy-Back And Money Laundering Scheme**

NEW YORK—Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced today the sentencing of two pharmacy owners, a supervising pharmacist and ten corporations for defrauding several government-funded healthcare programs, including Medicaid and Medicare. An investigation revealed that on at least eight separate occasions between November 2013 and February 2014, the defendants paid patients hundreds of dollars in cash to forgo their prescription medications, the vast majority of which were to treat HIV.

- *Original Press Release:* <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-79-million-settlement-and-state-prison-sentences-major>

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OHIO

March 07, 2017

**Owners of Home Healthcare Agency Found Guilty of Medicaid Fraud**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine announced today that two owners of a home healthcare agency that once operated offices in Columbus, Cincinnati, and Dayton have been found guilty of Medicaid fraud.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/March-2017/Owners-of-Home-Healthcare-Agency-Found-Guilty-of-M>

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OKLAHOMA

March 03, 2017

**Attorney General Mike Hunter Announces Guilty Plea in Medicaid Fraud Case**

OKLAHOMA CITY – The owner of a behavior health counseling service pleaded guilty to multiple counts of Medicaid fraud following charges brought by the Oklahoma Attorney General’s Office. Dennis Ray Blackman, 61, of Atoka, owned and operated Atoka Counseling Service, a company providing behavior health counseling services in Atoka, McAlester, and Poteau, Oklahoma. Blackman was also a licensed professional counselor and alcohol and drug counselor. Blackman is alleged to have submitted false claims for therapy services purportedly provided to Medicaid recipients, resulting in payment to Blackman of over \$23,000 in Medicaid funds.

- *Original Press Release:* [https://www.ok.gov/triton/modules/newsroom/newsroom\\_article.php?id=258&article\\_id=2978](https://www.ok.gov/triton/modules/newsroom/newsroom_article.php?id=258&article_id=2978)  
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## Consumer Advocacy

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### Multistate Advocacy – Federal Protections for College Students

**Date:** March 16, 2017

**Details:** Attorney General Mark R. Herring has joined 20 other state attorneys general and regulators from across the country in calling on the U.S Secretary of Education and Congressional leaders to maintain strong federal protections for taxpayers and for college students who attend for-profit institutions. In a letter to Secretary of Education Elisabeth "Betsy" DeVos and U.S. Senate and House leadership, Herring and his fellow attorneys general highlight some of the ways for-profit schools have harmed student borrowers and detail their concerns over rolling back federal protections that guard students from some of the worst actors in the for-profit school industry.

*Example Press Release:* <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/907-march-10-2017-attorney-general-herring-calls-on-trump-administration-and-congressional-leaders-to-maintain-federal-protections-for-college-students>

**Files:** AG Letter

<http://ag.virginia.gov/files/Updated-multistate-letter-on-for-profits-Feb-2017.pdf>

**States:** 20 states led by Illinois, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia

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### Multistate Advocacy - Department of Justice Action Regarding CFPB

**Date:** March 10, 2017

**Details:** Attorney General Josh Hawley filed a brief in federal court arguing the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau ("CFPB") is unconstitutional. Joined by 14 other states, the brief was filed ahead of oral arguments in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals.

*Example Press Release:* <https://www.ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2017-news-archives/ag-hawley-takes-on-unconstitutional-consumer-financial-protection-bureau>

**Files:** Amicus Brief

[https://law.georgia.gov/sites/law.georgia.gov/files/related\\_files/press\\_release/2017-03-10%20-%20PHH%20v.%20CFPB%20-%20States%27%20Amicus%20Brief%20%282%29.pdf](https://law.georgia.gov/sites/law.georgia.gov/files/related_files/press_release/2017-03-10%20-%20PHH%20v.%20CFPB%20-%20States%27%20Amicus%20Brief%20%282%29.pdf)

**States:** 15 States led by Missouri, including Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Nevada, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, West Virginia, and Wisconsin

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## Multistate Advocacy - Exxon Investigation

**Date:** March 01, 2017

**Details:** District of Columbia Attorney General Karl A. Racine has joined a coalition of attorneys general from across the nation to again urge Rep. Lamar Smith, Chairman of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, to stop attempting to interfere with investigations by the State of New York and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts into possible securities and consumer protection law violations by the ExxonMobil Corporation. The letter also urges Rep. Smith to withdraw subpoenas sent to the attorneys general of Massachusetts and New York demanding information about the investigations.

*Example Press Release: <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-and-colleagues-14-states-urge-end-congressional-interference-exxon>*

**Files:** AG Letter

[https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/oag/release\\_content/attachments/State%27s%20letter%20to%20SST%20Committee%2002%2027%202017.pdf](https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/oag/release_content/attachments/State%27s%20letter%20to%20SST%20Committee%2002%2027%202017.pdf)

**States:** 14 States led by Maryland, California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Mississippi, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington

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## ALABAMA

March 08, 2017

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL STEVEN T. MARSHALL PRAISES ALABAMA LEGISLATURE'S PASSAGE OF KEY LAW ENFORCEMENT BILLS**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steven T. Marshall praised the Alabama Senate and House Wednesday for their recent passage of two key law enforcement bills backed by the Alabama Attorney General's Office during the current legislative session. "I applaud the work of the Alabama Senate and House in quickly passing two major bills supported by my office to help curb costly Medicaid fraud and toughen Alabama's extradition law," said Attorney General Marshall.

➤ *Original Press Release: <http://www.ago.state.al.us/News-1009>*

March 07, 2017

### **DURING NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION WEEK, AG MARSHALL ANNOUNCES TOP CONSUMER COMPLAINTS**

(MONTGOMERY) – During National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Steven T. Marshall announced the top consumer complaints received in the office’s Consumer Interest Division during 2016. He also urged Alabamians to notify his office when they experience or suspect consumer fraud. “Our best allies in fighting fraud and scams are the consumers themselves,” said Attorney General Marshall. “Unfortunately, the more successful we are in this battle, the more likely the perpetrators are to update and adapt their illegal activities.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ago.state.al.us/News-1007>

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## ARIZONA

March 28, 2017

### **SCAM ALERT: Fake Basketball Tickets**

PHOENIX– Attorney General Mark Brnovich today issued a scam alert reminding college basketball fans to watch out for fake ticket scams ahead of the NCAA Final Four Games. High profile sporting events are prime targets for scammers.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/scam-alert-fake-basketball-tickets>

March 06, 2017

### **AG Brnovich Kicks Off AZ Consumer Protection Week**

PHOENIX - In recognition of Arizona Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Mark Brnovich released a list of the Top AZ Consumer Fraud Complaints received in 2016. The Attorney General’s Office received more than 15,000 consumer complaints and recovered more than \$3.9 million dollars for Arizona consumers in 2016.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-kicks-az-consumer-protection-week>

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## ARKANSAS

March 29, 2017

### **CONSUMER ALERT: Car Warranty Scams Aim to Steal Cash**

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansans are reporting unscrupulous sales people who aim to scare them into purchasing unnecessary third-party car warranties to the Arkansas Attorney General’s office. The sales pitches are usually over the phone with scammers posing as a representative of a car

dealer, manufacturer or insurer and telling consumers that their car warranty is about to expire.

- *Original Press Release: <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/consumer-alerts/car-warranty-scams-aim-to-steal-cash/>*

March 22, 2017

### **VETERAN ALERT: Interest Rates Capped for Military Families**

LITTLE ROCK – Our military men and women deserve our utmost respect, but there are bad actors who take advantage of military service members and their families, especially when it comes to lending money. Creditors and lenders are already prohibited by law from taking advantage of active duty military members, but the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) is meant to provide additional safeguards while they navigate deployment, change of duty station orders or other unique circumstances military families face, especially related to buying or owning a home.

- *Original Press Release: <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/consumer-alerts/interest-rates-capped-for-military-families>*

March 08, 2017

### **Top 10 Consumer Complaints**

LITTLE ROCK – In conjunction with National Consumer Protection Week, March 5-11, Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge today announced the top 10 most common complaints the Attorney General’s office received in 2016. National Consumer Protection Week is a partnership with attorneys general from across the country, along with many national organizations, including the Better Business Bureau, Federal Trade Commission and AARP, to encourage consumers to understand their rights and make educated consumer decisions.

- *Original Press Release: <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/consumer-alerts/2016-top-10-complaints>*

March 01, 2017

### **CONSUMER ALERT: Hackers are taking Hostages in Cyberspace**

LITTLE ROCK – Hackers are taking hostages in cyberspace and using new methods to extort money from individuals and businesses. Using methods called “ransomware,” they can capture and control access to prized photos, like wedding albums or pictures of children or grandchildren, or important documents, like taxes or legal documents. Using a virus, computer files are remotely encrypted and users can no longer view them, unless you pay the hackers for the “key” to unlock the files. Often these criminals demand payment in Bitcoin or some other untraceable form of payment. The Arkansas Attorney General’s office has been contacted about this growing form of malicious malware that can get installed on a computer or mobile phone without the user even knowing, until they try to access a file that has been locked.

The FBI reports ransomware attacks hit an all-time high in 2016.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/consumer-alerts/hackers-taking-hostages-in-cyberspace/>

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## COLORADO

March 23, 2017

### **AG Coffman Attends Bill Signing For Three Important Criminal Justice Bills**

DENVER— Today Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman joined bill sponsors at a formal ceremony where Governor Hickenlooper signed three important criminal justice bills into law. These bills were proposed as part of the Attorney General’s 2017 legislative agenda.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://coag.gov/press-room/press-releases/03-23-17-0>

March 07, 2017

### **AG Coffman Kicks Off National Consumer Protection Week Unveiling the Top 10 Consumer Complaints and Inquiries in Colorado**

In recognition of National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman today unveiled the list of the top ten consumer complaints reported to her office in 2016. During the 2016 calendar year, consumers filed 8,707 complaints and inquiries with the Consumer Protection Section of the Office of the Attorney General.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://coag.gov/press-room/press-releases/03-07-17>

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## CONNECTICUT

March 20, 2017

### **Attorney General Jepsen Provides Testimony in Support of Revising the Uniform Fraudulent Transfer Act**

HARTFORD – Attorney General George Jepsen today provided testimony to the legislature's Judiciary Committee in support of Senate Bill 1021, An Act Revising the Uniform Fraudulent Transfer Act, legislation that aims to prevent bankruptcy courts from ordering colleges and universities to pay back money parents or guardians had paid to send their children to college. The proposed legislation is in response to dozens of cases brought by Chapter 7 bankruptcy trustees throughout Connecticut and the United States, in which bankruptcy trustees have used the current state fraudulent transfer laws to require colleges and universities to pay back to

bankruptcy estates the amount a parent or guardian paid for their child's education.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.ct.gov/ag/cwp/view.asp?Q=591244&A=2341>

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## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

March 15, 2017

### **Attorney General Racine Introduces Bill to Improve District's Consumer-Protection Law**

WASHINGTON, D. C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine announced today that he has submitted legislation to the Council of the District of Columbia to update the Consumer Protection Procedures Act (CPPA), the District's general consumer protection law. The legislation is designed to update the CPPA to reflect best practices from other states' consumer protection laws, making it easier for the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to protect consumers in the District from fraud and other abuses.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-introduces-bill-improve-district%E2%80%99s-consumer-protection-law>

March 13, 2017

### **Attorney General Racine Warns Residents of Immigration Scam**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today warned immigrant communities in the District of Columbia of a potential scam involving persons posing as federal Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and placing bogus Search/Removal Warrants on homes. The warrants threaten the occupants with searches and potential removal, and could be part of an effort to con residents of immigrant communities into sharing important personal financial information or to coerce them into making payments to avoid further action.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-warns-residents-immigration-scam>

March 09, 2017

### **Attorney General Racine Reminds Residents of 'Seven Scams to Avoid' this Tax Season**

WASHINGTON, D. C. – With the filing season for District and federal income tax returns underway, Attorney General Karl A. Racine today cautioned District residents to be on the lookout for fraudulent schemes common during tax season. In particular, he singled out "Seven Scams to Avoid" for the 2017 tax season.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-reminds-residents-%E2%80%98seven-scams-avoid%E2%80%99-tax-season>

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## FLORIDA

March 06, 2017

### **Attorney General Bondi Recognizes Consumer Protection Week**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi is warning Floridians about the latest scams and highlighting some of her office’s more notable successes this Consumer Protection Week. Attorney General Bondi will also be reaching out to consumers directly through Twitter with tips to avoid becoming a victim of a scam. Since 2011, Attorney General Bondi’s Consumer Protection Division has conducted hundreds of investigations and recovered billions of dollars for Floridians.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/1710581D7C85ECFC852580DB00614079>

March 03, 2017

### **Attorney General Bondi Releases Guide to Safeguard Against ID Theft**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Identity theft, especially during tax season, is a serious threat to Floridians. Today, Attorney General Pam Bondi is releasing an Identity Theft Resource Guide that offers a wealth of information about the many forms of identity theft, ways consumers can further protect private information and steps to take if identity theft occurs.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/E4E468ED5AF2231D852580D80059AB09>

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## GEORGIA

March 06, 2017

### **Attorney General Chris Carr Celebrates National Consumer Protection Week**

ATLANTA, GA – As part of National Consumer Protection Week, which is March 5-11, Attorney General Chris Carr is encouraging all Georgia consumers to educate themselves about their rights and responsibilities under the law. “The Office of the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection websites – [consumer.georgia.gov](http://consumer.georgia.gov) and [ConsumerEd.com](http://ConsumerEd.com) – contain a great deal of helpful information on a wide variety of consumer topics,” said Attorney General Chris Carr.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2017-03-06/attorney-general-chris-carr-celebrates-national-consumer-protection-week>

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## ILLINOIS

March 31, 2017

### **MADIGAN: HANG UP ON PHONY “CAN YOU HEAR ME?” SCAMS**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today alerted Illinois residents to beware of phone call scams that attempt to record consumers saying “yes.” Scammers can use the recorded “yes” to authorize unwanted charges to your credit card or withdrawals from your bank accounts. Recently, Madigan’s office has received an increase in complaints about these scam calls from Illinois residents.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_03/20170331.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_03/20170331.html)

March 15, 2017

### **ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN: BILL TO REFORM STUDENT LOAN INDUSTRY IN ILLINOIS PASSES COMMITTEE**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced that a Senate committee passed legislation to reform the student loan servicing industry in Illinois to better protect student loan borrowers. Senate Bill 1351, drafted by Madigan’s office and Sen. Daniel Biss, would create a Student Loan Bill of Rights to better protect borrowers from abuses in the student loan industry. Members of the Senate’s Financial Institutions Committee passed the measure earlier today. The legislation was prompted by Madigan’s investigation and lawsuit against Navient, one of the largest student loan servicers in the country, and its predecessor Sallie Mae Bank, for widespread student loan abuses.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_03/20170315b.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_03/20170315b.html)

March 06, 2017

### **MADIGAN ANNOUNCES TOP 10 CONSUMER COMPLAINTS**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced her office's annual top 10 consumer complaints for 2016 that again show consumer debt and identity theft ranked as the top concerns among Illinois consumers in the last year. Joining Madigan in discussing the top scams facing Illinois consumers were Todd Kossow with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)'s Midwest Region, Steve Bernas with the Better Business Bureau (BBB) of Chicago and Northern Illinois and E.C. Woodson with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service in Chicago.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_03/20170306.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_03/20170306.html)

March 01, 2017

### **MADIGAN WARNS RESIDENTS TO BE ON ALERT FOR STORM-RELATED REPAIR SCAMS**

Chicago — Following Tuesday’s severe thunderstorms and tornadoes in central and southern Illinois and the Chicago area, Attorney General Lisa Madigan today warned residents in



impacted areas to be on alert for scammers looking to exploit homeowners and business owners who may be in need of repairs from storm-related damage.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_03/20170301b.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_03/20170301b.html)

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## KANSAS

March 17, 2017

### **Kansans safely dispose of 40 tons of personal documents during National Consumer Protection Week**

TOPEKA – Kansans safely disposed of more than 40 tons of personal documents during National Consumer Protection Week, March 5-11, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt announced today. “The outstanding turnout at our free document destruction events shows that Kansans recognize the importance of keeping their personal information secure,” Schmidt said. “The documents dropped off have now been safely destroyed and are out of the reach of identity thieves.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/03/17/kansans-safely-dispose-of-40-tons-of-personal-documents-during-national-consumer-protection-week>

March 13, 2017

### **AG Derek Schmidt: Kansas fire damage could attract illegal contractors, price gouging, charity scams**

TOPEKA – Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt is urging residents in areas damaged by recent wildfires to use caution during the cleanup and rebuilding to avoid scams by transient contractors or price gouging. He also warned all Kansans wishing to help with recovery efforts to watch out for fake charities soliciting donations.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/03/13/ag-derek-schmidt-kansas-fire-damage-could-attract-illegal-contractors-price-gouging-charity-scams>

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## KANSAS

March 07, 2017

### **Consumer Corner: Avoid these most-common scams of 2016**

This week – the first full week of March – we observe National Consumer Protection Week. While our office focuses year-round on protecting consumers from scams and rip-offs, this week in particular we remind Kansans to be diligent in keeping themselves safe. It is also one of our customs this week to report to you some of the most common scams our office received

complaints about over the past year. These scams have been around for years and yet we hear complaints about each of these nearly every day.

- *Original Press Release:* <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/consumer-corner/2017/03/07/consumer-corner-avoid-these-most-common-scams-of-2016>

March 02, 2017

### **Consumer Alert: Storm damage could attract illegal contractors**

TOPEKA – (March 2, 2017) – Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt is urging southeast Kansas residents to use caution to avoid scams by transient contractors following Tuesday’s hailstorm. “After storm damage, our instinct is to clean up and make repairs as quickly as possible,” Schmidt said. “When considering roofing work on a home or business, it is important that consumers make sure their roofing contractor is properly registered before signing any contract or having any work done...”

- *Original Press Release:* <http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/03/02/consumer-alert-storm-damage-could-attract-illegal-contractors>

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## LOUISIANA

March 30, 2017

### **Attorney General Jeff Landry Warns of Pirate Website Hacking**

BATON ROUGE, LA – Online operators have found a new way to target our State’s citizens by infecting visitors to so-called pirate websites, and Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry is issuing an alert to warn consumers. “People should avoid pirate websites for multiple reasons, but protection from malware is a critical one,” said General Landry. “It is crucial that Louisiana’s consumers are aware of the dangers associated with visiting content theft websites.”

- *Original Press Release:* <https://www.ag.state.la.us/Article.aspx/2392?TypeId=1&CatId=3>

March 21, 2017

### **Attorney General Jeff Landry Issues Warning of Government Scams**

BATON ROUGE, LA - Attorney General Jeff Landry is warning Louisiana consumers of potential callers posing as federal agents in an attempt to obtain personal information. “These types of scammers are shameless criminals who will go to great lengths to get your information,” said General Landry. “It is important to remember that legitimate officials from government agencies like the IRS will never call asking for personal information.”

- *Original Press Release:* <https://www.ag.state.la.us/Article.aspx/2383?TypeId=1&CatId=3>

March 03, 2017

**Attorney General Jeff Landry Announces Consumer Protection Week**

BATON ROUGE, LA – Next week is National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW); and Attorney General Jeff Landry is joining consumer groups, national advocacy organizations, and over 100 federal, state, and local agencies to help educate Louisiana consumers on ways to protect themselves in the marketplace.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://www.ag.state.la.us/Article.aspx/2377?catID=5>

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MASSACHUSETTS

March 27, 2017

**AG Healey Testifies Before the DPU Urging It to Deny Eversource’s Proposed \$300 Million Rate Increase**

BOSTON – Advocating on behalf of the 1.4 million Eversource customers, Attorney General Maura Healey in testimony Thursday night urged the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) to reject the utility company’s request to increase its customers’ electric rates by more than \$96 million next year and an additional \$50 million annually for the next four years.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/ag-healey-testifies-deny-ever-source-rate-increase.html>

March 15, 2017

**AG Healey Announces Financial Aid Education Campaign for Students Considering College**

BOSTON – As colleges and universities begin sending financial aid award letters to prospective students throughout Massachusetts, Attorney General Maura Healey has launched a campaign to help educate families about their higher education options and understand how to pay for them. Last year, the AG’s Office and the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce created a Student Debt Working Group to develop concrete proposals to help Massachusetts students pursue quality, affordable higher education. This new initiative is the result of a partnership between the AG’s Office and uAspire – a Working Group member and nonprofit organization that provides students with counseling and tools to find an affordable path to and through college.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/financial-aid-education.html>

March 07, 2017

**National Consumer Protection Week: AG Healey’s Office Provides Guidance for Consumers, Hosts Outreach Events Across the State**

BOSTON – During the 19th annual National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General

Maura Healey is offering tips and resources to consumers to help protect themselves from fraud. The AG's Office will also be participating in consumer education and outreach events across the state.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/national-consumer-protection-week.html>

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## MICHIGAN

March 14, 2017

### **Schuette Offers Tips to Help Michigan Consumers Avoid Tax Scams**

LANSING – With tax season entering full swing, Michigan Attorney General today issued an updated consumer alert with tips to avoid the latest tax scams and IRS related scams. The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Team often sees an uptick in tax related scams during the early spring months.

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-406933--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-406933--,00.html)

March 08, 2017

### **Schuette Releases 2016 List of Top Ten Michigan Consumer Complaints; Recognizes National Consumer Protection Week**

LANSING – Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today recognized the start of the 19th annual National Consumer Protection Week by releasing his annual list of the Top Ten Michigan Consumer Complaints. "My job is to protect Michigan, and protecting consumers from scams continues to be one of my top priorities," said Schuette. "Consumer Protection is integral to the Department of Attorney General, from alerting Michigan residents of the latest phone scams to monitoring charitable organizations and making sure donations are used properly.

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-406435--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-406435--,00.html)

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## MISSISSIPPI

March 01, 2017

### **AG Announces Upcoming 11th Annual Community Shred Days**

Attorney General Jim Hood will host the 11th annual Community Shred Days next week in Jackson, Hattiesburg and D'Iberville. Attorney General Hood encourages Mississippi consumers

to take advantage of an opportunity to better protect themselves from becoming victims of identity theft.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ago.state.ms.us/releases/ag-announces-upcoming-11th-annual-community-shred-days/>

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## MISSOURI

March 09, 2017

### **Attorney General's Office to Help Resource Missourians Affected by Tornadoes**

Jefferson City, Mo. – Attorney General Josh Hawley’s Consumer Protection Section will be in Oak Grove this weekend to answer questions and provide information along with disaster-related assistance. Representatives from the Attorney General’s Office will provide guidance on selecting reputable contractors, avoiding price gouging, protecting personal information from identity fraud, and other scams seen after natural disasters.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2017-news-archives/attorney-general-s-office-to-help-resource-missourians-affected-by-tornadoes>

March 03, 2017

### **Attorney General’s Office to Aid Consumers Affected by Tornado**

Jefferson City, Mo. - The Attorney General’s Office is joining with local and state agencies to help those affected by this week’s devastating storms. Representatives from the Attorney General’s Office will provide resource materials in Perryville with tips on selecting reputable contractors, avoiding price gouging, protecting personal information from identity fraud, and other scams seen after natural disasters.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2017-news-archives/attorney-general-s-office-to-aid-consumers-affected-by-tornado>

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## MONTANA

March 22, 2017

### **W-2 Scam Targets Businesses, Nonprofits, and Tribal Organizations as Tax Filing Deadline Approaches**

The Attorney General’s Office of Consumer Protection (OCP) has received multiple reports of businesses being targeted by a sophisticated “spear phishing” email scam that is also known as the “CEO Scam” or the “W-2 Scam.” While OCP has only received reports of three businesses falling victim to this scam so far in Montana, nationally, other entities have been targeted in this scam, such as nonprofit and tribal organizations. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) warns

that this scheme is meant to compromise the personal information of as many people as possible within each targeted organization.

- *Original Press Release: <https://dojmt.gov/w-2-scam-targets-businesses-nonprofits-tribal-organizations-tax-filing-deadline-approaches/>*

March 08, 2017

### **Office of Consumer Protection Offers Scam Protection Tips as Part of Consumer Protection Week**

During National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Tim Fox urges Montanans to contact his Office of Consumer Protection if they think they are, or may be, victims of a scam. In 2016, more than half of the callers who contacted the Office of Consumer Protection at the Montana Department of Justice were concerned about scams or potential scams. Elderly persons, and their friends and family members, especially need to be on the alert for these scammers because scammers target our senior citizens.

- *Original Press Release: <https://dojmt.gov/office-consumer-protection-offers-scam-protection-tips-part-consumer-protection-week/>*

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## NEBRASKA

March 06, 2017

### **National Consumer Protection Week: A Closer Look at Child Identity Theft**

Lincoln – In recognition of National Consumer Protection Week - a campaign that encourages consumers nationwide to take full advantage of their consumer rights and make better-informed decisions – the Attorney General’s Office is focusing educational efforts on child identity theft.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ago.nebraska.gov/news/national-consumer-protection-week-closer-look-child-identity-theft>*

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## NEVADA

March 09, 2017

### **Attorney General Laxalt Warns Nevadans of Rental Listing Scams**

Carson City, NV – Today, Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt warns Nevadans of rental listing scams that have become especially prevalent in southern Nevada. While many landlords are simply looking to rent their property, scam artists can also use false Internet listings to

convince renters to wire them money or to rent out foreclosed properties. Scammers looking to earn money quickly may post rental listings online offering low rental prices.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt\\_Warns\\_Nevadans\\_of\\_Rental\\_Listing\\_Scams/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney_General_Laxalt_Warns_Nevadans_of_Rental_Listing_Scams/)

March 08, 2017

**Attorney General Laxalt Advises Nevadans on How to File Consumer Complaints with his Office**

Carson City, NV – Today, Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt encourages Nevadans who believe they are victims of fraud, deception or an unfair business practices to file a complaint with his Office. “Diligent consumers who take the time to file complaints assist my Office in preventing fraud, deception and unfair business practices in Nevada,” said Laxalt. “I encourage Nevadans to familiarize themselves with the complaint process so that my Office can best assist with their individual matters.”

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt\\_Advises\\_Nevadans\\_on\\_How\\_to\\_File\\_Consumer\\_Complaints\\_with\\_his\\_Office/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney_General_Laxalt_Advises_Nevadans_on_How_to_File_Consumer_Complaints_with_his_Office/)

March 07, 2017

**Attorney General Laxalt Warns Nevadans to be Wary of W-2 Scam During Tax Season**

Carson City, NV – Today, Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt warns Nevada’s taxpayers of a new phishing scam targeting a wide range of organizations by collecting W-2 data to file fraudulent tax returns.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt\\_Warns\\_Nevadans\\_to\\_be\\_Wary\\_of\\_W-2\\_Scam\\_During\\_Tax\\_Season/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney_General_Laxalt_Warns_Nevadans_to_be_Wary_of_W-2_Scam_During_Tax_Season/)

March 06, 2017

**Attorney General Laxalt Provides Tips for Using Mobile Apps**

Carson City, NV – Today, Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt advises consumers on the use of mobile apps, or software downloaded onto a mobile device such as a phone or tablet. Communication device manufacturers provide “app stores” where consumers can download and install apps. While many apps provide entertainment or educational content, consumers should be aware that using apps, especially those that are developed by fraudsters, may present risks to their personal information.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt\\_Provides\\_Tips\\_for\\_Using\\_Mobile\\_Apps/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney_General_Laxalt_Provides_Tips_for_Using_Mobile_Apps/)

March 06, 2017

**Nevada Attorney General's Office Celebrates 19th Annual National Consumer Protection Week**

Carson City, NV – Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt and his Bureau of Consumer Protection are joining state attorneys general throughout the country to celebrate National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW), March 5-11,2017. As part of the 19th annual NCPW, AG Laxalt urges Nevadans to learn more about how to protect themselves against scams and theft of private information.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Nevada\\_Atorney\\_General%E2%80%99s\\_Office\\_Celebrates\\_19th\\_Annual\\_National\\_Consumer\\_Protection\\_Week/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Nevada_Atorney_General%E2%80%99s_Office_Celebrates_19th_Annual_National_Consumer_Protection_Week/)

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NEW JERSEY

March 13, 2017

**PRICE GOUGING ALERT:**

**Be Aware of Price Gouging as Winter Storm Stella Approaches**

NEWARK – The Office of the Attorney General and the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs are reminding consumers about New Jersey's price gouging law as the state prepares for possible effects from Winter Storm Stella. Merchants and businesses that engage in price gouging in the State of Emergency declared for this winter storm will be punished to the fullest extent of the law and may face criminal and/or civil sanctions.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170313c.html>

March 09, 2017

**National Consumer Protection Week:**

**Attorney General Porrino, Division of Consumer Affairs Warn Investors of Scams, Provide Resources to Educate Residents**

NEWARK – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs are warning residents to beware of scams when looking for ways to realize the best return on their investments. As part of National Consumer Protection Week, which runs from March 5th to March 11th, the Division's Bureau of Securities has outlined a number of steps which investors can take to protect themselves and their hard earned savings.

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170310a.html>



March 09, 2017

**National Consumer Protection Week:**

**Beware of Fake Charities Soliciting Your Donations, Including Social Media Charity Scams That Play on Your Emotions**

NEWARK - Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs today continued the commemoration of National Consumer Protection Week by reminding consumers to exercise caution when donating to disaster relief funds, crowdfunding campaigns, and other charitable causes promoted on social media. "With sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter providing millions of users with images and stories of human suffering, the urge to donate can become overwhelming. No one understands this better than the con artists," said Attorney General Porrino.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170309b.html>

March 08, 2017

**National Consumer Protection Week:**

**"Motor Vehicle Sales/Repairs" Climbs to Top of New Jersey's 2016 Consumer Complaints List, "Home Improvements" Drops to Number Two**

NEWARK - Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs commemorated National Consumer Protection Week today by announcing New Jersey's top 10 consumer complaints from 2016 and highlighting the Division's initiatives to protect consumers from fraud.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170308a.html>

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NEW MEXICO

March 11, 2017

**AG Balderas Releases Consumer Protection "Go-To Guide" for New Mexicans**

Santa Fe, NM - On the last day of National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Hector Balderas released a Consumer Protection "Go-To Guide" for New Mexicans. While this list of resources is not intended to be comprehensive, if you have questions about possible scams, making smart financial decisions or simply need help, this list is a quick reference guide for assistance. If you need help finding a specific resource, please call the Office of the Attorney General toll free at 1-844-255-9210.

➤ *Original Press Release:* [http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas\\_Releases\\_Consumer\\_Protection\\_%E2%80%9CGo\\_To\\_Guide%E2%80%9D\\_for\\_New\\_Mexicans.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas_Releases_Consumer_Protection_%E2%80%9CGo_To_Guide%E2%80%9D_for_New_Mexicans.pdf)

March 10, 2017

**SCAM ALERT: AG Balderas Warns Consumers about Top Scams Hitting New Mexico**

Albuquerque, NM - On Day 6 of National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Balderas issued a Scam Alert for the top scams hitting New Mexico consumers. "During Consumer Protection Week, I'm urging New Mexicans to educate themselves about the most common scams hitting New Mexico households and how to spot them before it's too late," said Attorney General Balderas. "Never, ever give out your personal or financial information to someone who calls or emails you."

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas\\_Warns\\_Consumers\\_about\\_Top\\_Scams\\_Hitting\\_New\\_Mexico.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas_Warns_Consumers_about_Top_Scams_Hitting_New_Mexico.pdf)

March 09, 2017

**AG Balderas: Save Money by Becoming Energy Efficient this Consumer Protection Week**

Las Cruces, NM – On Day 5 of National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Hector Balderas released tips on how New Mexicans can save money by becoming more energy efficient. "Since energy is such a necessity for all families and businesses, it's important to understand your utility service, your rights, and how you can save money on your bills," said Attorney General Balderas. "This Consumer Protection Week, take some time to become more energy efficient and save some money for your family."

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG\\_Balderas\\_Save\\_Money\\_by\\_Becoming\\_Energy\\_Efficient.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG_Balderas_Save_Money_by_Becoming_Energy_Efficient.pdf)

March 08, 2017

**Consumer Protection Week Day 4: "D" is for Dealing with Debt**

Santa Fe, NM – On Day 4 of National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Hector Balderas released guidelines for dealing with debt. Sometimes consumers find themselves in more debt than they can handle, but there are many options out there for New Mexicans.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Consumer\\_Protection\\_Week\\_Day\\_4\\_D\\_is\\_for\\_Dealing\\_with\\_Debt.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Consumer_Protection_Week_Day_4_D_is_for_Dealing_with_Debt.pdf)

March 07, 2017

**Day 3 of Consumer Protection Week: Attorney General Balderas Releases Guidelines for Successful Charitable Giving**

Albuquerque, NM – On Day 3 of National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Hector Balderas released tips for successful charitable giving. New Mexicans give \$700 million annually to charities, and New Mexico alone has over 6,000 different charities operating within its borders. "New Mexicans have huge hearts and give generously to charities every year, but I

want to make sure our families are making the best donation choices for their finances,” Attorney General Balderas said.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas\\_Releases\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Successful\\_Charitable\\_Giving.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas_Releases_Guidelines_for_Successful_Charitable_Giving.pdf)

March 06, 2017

**Attorney General Balderas Releases Consumer Protection Borrowing Guidelines**

Albuquerque, NM – On the second day of National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Hector Balderas released consumer protection guidelines for successful borrowing for New Mexico families. “Borrowing money is a part of everyday life and I want New Mexico families to make the most advantageous decisions for their finances and future success,” Attorney General Balderas said.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas\\_Releases\\_Consumer\\_Protection\\_Borrowing\\_Guidelines\\_B.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas_Releases_Consumer_Protection_Borrowing_Guidelines_B.pdf)

March 05, 2017

**Attorney General Balderas Kicks Off National Consumer Protection Week with the ABC’s of Consumer Protection**

Albuquerque, NM - The week of March 5, 2017 is National Consumer Protection Week. As part of his work to protect New Mexico families, Attorney General Hector Balderas announced “The ABC’s of Consumer Protection.” Every day this week, the Office of the Attorney General will be releasing information and tips to help consumers.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas\\_Kicks\\_Off\\_National\\_Consumer\\_Protection\\_Week.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas_Kicks_Off_National_Consumer_Protection_Week.pdf)

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NEW YORK

March 21, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces Record Number Of Data Breach Notices For 2016**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced that his office received a record number of data breach notices in 2016. The close to 1,300 reported data breaches in 2016 represented a 60 percent increase over the previous year; these breaches exposed the personal records of 1.6 million New Yorkers in 2016, representing a threefold increase over the prior year. Analysis conducted by the Attorney General's office revealed that the exposed information consisted overwhelmingly of social security numbers and financial account

information and surmised that hacking and inadvertent disclosure were the two leading causes of data security breaches.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-record-number-data-breach-notices-2016>*

March 19, 2017

### **As Tax Day Approaches A.G. Schneiderman Releases Consumer Alert About Frequent Tax Season Frauds**

NEW YORK – With this year’s tax day just a month away, Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman provided taxpayers with a variety of tips to help them avoid fraudulent tax schemes. The Attorney General also urged New Yorkers to stay vigilant and report to his office any suspected scams intended to steal personal and financial information from consumers.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/tax-day-approaches-ag-schneiderman-releases-consumer-alert-about-frequent-tax-season>*

March 13, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Warns Against Price Gouging During Winter Storm Stella In New York State**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today issued a consumer alert warning both consumers and businesses about price gouging ahead of this week’s blizzard that is expected to impact parts of New York State....General Business Law prohibits excessive increases in prices of essential goods and services like food, water, gas, generators, batteries, and flashlights, hotel lodging, and transportation, during natural disasters or other events that disrupt the market. During and after severe winter weather events, these goods and services might also include snow plowing, snow removal from roofs, shovels and other snow removal equipment, salt...

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-warns-against-price-gouging-during-winter-storm-stella-new-york-state>*

March 09, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Warns Against Price Gouging Following Severe Wind Storms In Rochester And Across Western New York**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today issued a consumer alert warning both consumers and businesses about price gouging following the severe wind storms that took place in Rochester and across western New York. Several Monroe County towns have declared states of emergency due to damaging wind storms that have prevented travel on roads and closed down multiple school districts. Power outages were reported across the county and consumers should be cognizant of possible price gouging when seeking essential goods and services.

- *Original Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-warns-against-price-gouging-following-severe-wind-storms-rochester-and>*

March 06, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Releases New York's Top Ten Frauds Of 2016, Warns Consumers To Beware Of Scammers**

NEW YORK- Marking the start of National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today released the list of the top ten consumer fraud complaints received by his office in 2016. Attorney General Schneiderman also offered a variety of tips on how to avoid scams in the future.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-releases-new-yorks-top-ten-frauds-2016-warns-consumers-beware-scammers>

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## NORTH CAROLINA

March 06, 2017

### **AG Stein Warns Consumers about Scams During National Consumer Protection Week**

(RALEIGH) Each year scams cost North Carolina consumers millions of dollars, often by stealing and then exploiting their confidential information. This National Consumer Protection Week we will highlight ways to avoid common scams.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/AG-Stein-Warns-Consumers-about-Scams-During-Nation.aspx>

March 04, 2017

### **Are you sure those tickets are real?**

Tickets to the upcoming UNC-Duke basketball game are hard to come by. So when someone used Craigslist to try to sell seats to the big game, it got the attention of police in Carrboro. They arranged a meeting with the seller, determined his tickets were fakes, and arrested him. It used to be harder to make fake tickets. Today's print-at-home tickets are printed on plain paper and it isn't difficult to create a legitimate-looking fake, complete with a barcode. Crooks can also use computers, copiers and printers to create phony traditional-style tickets on thick paper stock that can look and feel like the real thing.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ncdoj.gov/News-and-Alerts/News-Releases-and-Advisories/Are-you-sure-those-tickets-are-real.aspx>

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## OHIO

March 20, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Warns More Tax Scams Reported As Filing Deadline Nears**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today warned that more consumers are reporting tax-related scams with about four weeks remaining until the April 18 filing

deadline. In 2017, the Ohio Attorney General’s Office has logged more than 150 tax scams thus far in March, compared to 80 in January, and 175 in February.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/March-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Warns-More-Tax-Scams-Repor>

March 02, 2017

### **Following Severe Weather, Attorney General DeWine Warns of Storm-Chaser Scams**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today warned consumers to beware of home repair scams following the severe weather that hit Ohio this week. “If you have downed trees, a damaged roof, or other storm damage, be wary of people who unexpectedly show up at your door offering services,” Attorney General DeWine said.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/March-2017/Following-Severe-Weather-Attorney-General-DeWine>

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## OREGON

March 09, 2017

### **Attorney General Rosenblum Releases List of 2016 Top Ten Consumer Complaints**

In recognition of National Consumer Protection Week (March 5-11, 2017), Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum today announced the annual Oregon Department of Justice’s 2016 Top Ten Consumer Complaints. For the second year in a row, imposter scam calls, such as the IRS imposter scam, came in as the number one complaint in Oregon. Imposter scam calls received more than five times the number of consumer complaints as the next category. telecommunications and motor vehicle sales practices took the next two spots. New this year to the list is construction contractors, coming in tenth. telecommunications and motor vehicle sales practices took the next two spots. New this year to the list is construction contractors, coming in tenth.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.doj.state.or.us/releases/Pages/2017/re030917.aspx>

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## PENNSYLVANIA

March 28, 2017

### **Attorney General Shapiro warns of tax scams**

HARRISBURG — With the deadline looming to file tax returns, Attorney General Josh Shapiro is urging Pennsylvanians to beware of scam artists looking to steal their money and financial information as they prepare to file their returns. During tax season, identity theft cases increase as scammers use stolen information to file returns illegally and steal people’s refunds.

Pennsylvanians in recent years have also reported being swindled out of money by scam artists who falsely claim to be affiliated with the Internal Revenue Service via phone, text, or email.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=3112](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=3112)

March 15, 2017

**Attorney General Josh Shapiro warns Pennsylvanians about price gouging following today's winter storm**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today alerted Pennsylvania consumers and businesses about price gouging protections after a major winter storm deposited more than a foot of snow in many parts of Pennsylvania overnight and this morning. “As the snow subsides, we want Pennsylvanians to be aware of price-gouging and the laws in place to protect them from unfair price increases during emergencies,” Attorney General Shapiro said.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=3088](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=3088)

March 13, 2017

**Attorney General Josh Shapiro warns Pennsylvanians to be cautious of scams during a major winter storm**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today alerted Pennsylvania consumers and businesses to be on the lookout for scams as an expected major winter storm threatens to blanket much of Pennsylvania tomorrow in more than a foot of snow.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=3087](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=3087)

March 06, 2017

**Attorney General Josh Shapiro Kicks Off Consumer Protection Week with Western PA Residents Who Got Money Returned by Attorney General's Office**

PITTSBURGH — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today kicked off the Office of Attorney General's participation in Consumer Protection Week by hosting a forum featuring three western Pennsylvania residents who were victimized by scams – but received restitution with the help of the Office's Bureau of Consumer Protection.

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=3071](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=3071)

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## SOUTH DAKOTA

March 10, 2017

### **Attorney General Jackley Releases Top 10 Consumer Fraud Complaints as Part of National Consumer Protection Week**

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley has released the top 10 consumer complaints reported to his office in fiscal year 2016. “The Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division works with consumers and businesses to address a variety of consumer related issues,” said Jackley. “The Division is committed to serving South Dakotans and dedicated to stopping deceptive and unfair business practices.” In 2016, the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division recovered \$2,457,252 for South Dakota consumers. The Division fielded 32,670 consumer inquiries including phone calls, emails and correspondences.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=1748>

March 03, 2017

### **Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division to Participate in National Consumer Protection Week**

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley announced today that National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW) kicks off next week and the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division will join with federal, state and local government agencies and national organization to celebrate this 19th annual event. NCPW is a coordinated campaign that encourages consumers nationwide to take full advantage of their consumer rights and make better-informed decisions.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://atg.sd.gov/OurOffice/Media/pressreleasesdetail.aspx?id=1745>

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## TEXAS

March 21, 2017

### **AG Paxton: Beware of Callers Posing as the IRS in Tax Scam**

With the April 18th income tax deadline looming, Attorney General Ken Paxton is warning Texans to be aware of a recurring tax-related scam involving unsolicited calls from people masquerading as Internal Revenue Service agents. Scam artists tell consumers that they owe back taxes and threaten to have them arrested if they don’t provide immediate payment.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/news/releases/ag-paxton-beware-of-callers-posing-as-the-irs-in-tax-scam>



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## UTAH

March 08, 2017

### **AG Sean Reyes' National Consumer Protection Week Statement**

SALT LAKE CITY March 8, 2017 – Attorney General Sean Reyes released the following statement for National Consumer Protection Week: “We want all Utahns to be protected from frauds, scams, and schemes. In the AG’s Office, we are fortunate to work with Utah’s Division of Consumer Protection and the Department of Public Safety, with our federal partners at the SEC, FBI, and US Attorneys Office and our local law enforcement partners at county and city agencies across the state to thwart white collar criminals.

- **Original Press Release:** <https://attorneygeneral.utah.gov/featured-content/ag-sean-reyes-national-consumer-protection-week-statement>

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## VERMONT

March 13, 2017

### **Attorney General Launches New Initiative to Help Businesses**

Vermont Attorney General Thomas J. Donovan Jr., has launched a listening tour to make his office more responsive to Vermont small businesses. The effort is through the Attorney General’s Consumer Assistance Program (CAP) at the University of Vermont. CAP provides information, referral, and mediation services to address consumer complaints.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://ago.vermont.gov/focus/news/attorney-general-launches-new-initiative-to-help-businesses.php>

March 09, 2017

### **Attorney General Alerts Vermonters to Increased Scams**

A.G. Donovan Reports 25% Increase in Reported Scams, Releases Top 10 Scams of 2016 National Consumer Protection Week is March 5-11 Vermont Attorney General Thomas J. Donovan Jr., released new information to alert Vermonters about a dramatic increase in reported scams. The alert outlines the “Top 10 Scams” of 2016.

- **Original Press Release:** <http://ago.vermont.gov/focus/news/attorney-general-alerts-vermonters-to-increased-scams.php>

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## VIRGINIA

March 08, 2017

### **PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR MONEY FROM SCAMS AND FRAUDS**

RICHMOND (March 8, 2017)-During National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General

Mark R. Herring is urging Virginians to protect themselves and their hard-earned money from scams and frauds, whether they are perpetrated in-person, online, or on the phone. A 2015 survey found that approximately 25 million Americans lost approximately \$7.4 billion to phone scams alone, and with the rise of sophisticated technology to trick victims and conceal scammers' identities, that amount is likely to rise in the coming years.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/902-march-8-2017-protect-yourself-and-your-money-from-scams-and-frauds-w-video>*

March 07, 2017

### **HERRING WARNS VIRGINIANS ABOUT DANGERS OF PREDATORY LOANS**

RICHMOND(March 7, 2017)- Attorney General Mark R. Herring is encouraging Virginians to use National Consumer Protection Week as a time to familiarize themselves with the risks associated with small-dollar loans including payday, auto title, open-end, and online loans, and to understand their rights when taking out one of these potentially risky loans.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/901-march-7-2017-herring-warns-virginians-about-dangers-of-predatory-loans-w-video>*

March 06, 2017

### **HERRING ENCOURAGES VIRGINIANS TO KNOW THEIR RIGHTS DURING NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION WEEK**

RICHMOND - Attorney General Mark R. Herring's recently reorganized Consumer Protection Section will mark National Consumer Protection Week with a week-long campaign to help Virginians understand their rights as consumers, and to help Virginia businesses understand their responsibilities to their customers.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.oag.state.va.us/media-center/news-releases/897-march-6-2017-herring-encourages-virginians-to-know-their-rights-during-national-consumer-protection-week>*

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## WASHINGTON

March 06, 2017

### **CELEBRATE NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION WEEK WITH BBB**

DUPONT — Better Business Bureau serving the Northwest is partnering with agencies across the state to support National Consumer Protection Week, March 5-11. The annual campaign, celebrating 19 years, educates the public about their consumer rights and gives them access to free consumer-related resources to help them use their money wisely.

- *Original Press Release: <http://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/celebrate-national-consumer-protection-week-bbb>*

March 02, 2017

**AG Ferguson’s Student Loan Bill of Rights passes the House**

OLYMPIA — Attorney General Bob Ferguson’s Student Loan Bill of Rights legislation passed the Washington House of Representatives on Wednesday with bipartisan support. House Bill 1440 establishes baseline standards for student loan servicers, in addition to creating a student loan ombuds to help resolve student complaints and to educate borrowers about student loans.

➤ *Original Press Release:* <http://www.atg.wa.gov/node/12438>