

# THE STATE CENTER CONSUMER PROTECTION REPORT

April 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](http://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)

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## Consumer Protection Cases

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### ARIZONA

April 18, 2017

#### **AG Brnovich Obtains \$4.65 Million for Arizonans Who Purchased Theranos Blood Tests**

PHOENIX - Attorney General Mark Brnovich announced today his office obtained a full refund for every Arizonan who purchased a Theranos blood test. Theranos, Inc. agreed to pay \$4.65 million dollars in consumer restitution as part of a consent judgment reached with the Arizona Attorney General's Office.

Between 2013 and 2016, Theranos sold approximately 1.5 million blood tests to more than 175,000 Arizonans. According to Theranos, 10 percent of the tests were voided or corrected. Each customer will now be reimbursed the full amount the customer paid for testing regardless of whether the results were voided or corrected. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-obtains-465-million-arizonans-who-purchased-theranos-blood-tests>

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### ARKANSAS

April 13, 2017

#### **Rutledge Files Lawsuit Against U.S. Business Services**

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge today filed a consumer-protection lawsuit in Pulaski County Circuit Court against Florida-based U.S. Business Services LLC for violations of the Arkansas Deceptive Trade Practices Act.

“Using what looks like an official government tax notice or notification, U.S. Business Services has managed to convince many unsuspecting Arkansas business owners that they are failing to follow the law and that, for a fee, the company can help,” said Attorney General Rutledge.

“These unlawful actions and misrepresentations by this Florida company are wrong and must be stopped before more are harmed.” ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/rutledge-files-lawsuit-against-u.s-business-services/>

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### CALIFORNIA

April 20, 2017

#### **Attorney General Xavier Becerra: Walgreens Settles \$9.8 Million Whistleblower Case**

SACRAMENTO – Attorney General Xavier Becerra today announced a \$9.8 million settlement with Walgreens, one of the largest drugstore chains in the United States. The settlement involved allegations that Walgreens failed to adhere fully to requirements imposed by

California law for the dispensing of certain prescription drugs under Medi-Cal. The settlement is the result of lawsuits filed by whistleblowers and investigated and resolved by federal and state prosecutors. The lawsuits alleged that for more than five years, Walgreens falsely certified that it had complied with diagnosis-related requirements for the lawful dispensing of prescriptions to Medi-Cal patients. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-xavier-becerra-walgreens-settles%C2%A098-million%C2%A0whistleblower-case>

April 17, 2017

### **Attorney General Xavier Becerra Sues Charities For Falsely Claiming to Help Veterans**

OAKLAND – Attorney General Xavier Becerra today filed a civil lawsuit seeking to recover hundreds of thousands of dollars from two California charities claiming to support veterans. The lawsuit alleges that the operators of Wounded Warriors Support Group (WWSG) and Central Coast Equine Rescue and Retirement (CCERR) run raffles purportedly to support veterans, but instead spend the donated proceeds for personal use, including shopping at Victoria’s Secret, paying off personal credit card debt, and traveling, dining, traffic school, dressage equipment, and other personal expenses. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-xavier-becerra-sues-charities-falsely-claiming-help-veterans>

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## COLORADO

April 05, 2017

### **AG Coffman Announces \$491,000 Judgment Against Illegal and Abusive Debt Collection Agency**

Colorado Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman announced today that her office has shut down the unlicensed debt collection company Peak Resolution, LLC and secured a judgment requiring the defendants to pay approximately \$491,000 in consumer restitution, penalties, and attorney fees. The judgment also prohibits the defendants from ever doing business in Colorado or collecting from Colorado citizens again without proper licensure and full legal compliance. Dan Cane, Peak Resolution’s owner, and Chris Hagerman, the company’s primary manager, are also subject to the judgment. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://coag.gov/press-room/press-releases/04-05-17>

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## DELAWARE

April 26, 2017

### **Financial Management Consultant Indicted in Alleged Ponzi Scheme**

The Delaware Department of Justice Investor Protection Unit has obtained an indictment against Matthew A. Krimm, 35, of Abington, MD. The 25-count indictment includes charges of Racketeering and Securities Fraud. A Sussex County Grand Jury indicted Krimm, formerly of Rehoboth Beach, following a year-long investigation.

The indictment charges Krimm with soliciting and selling investments in his company that purportedly owned and operated a mortgage origination business. The indictment alleges that Krimm's companies did not in fact engage in any mortgage origination business. Instead, it is alleged that Krimm was running a Ponzi scheme, whereby he repaid his early investors with funds from later investors. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://news.delaware.gov/2017/04/26/mkin/>

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## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

April 25, 2017

### **Attorney General Racine Files Suit Against Columbia Heights Landlord for Housing, Consumer Protection Violations**

WASHINGTON, D. C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine announced that his office has filed a suit against the owners and managers of an apartment building at 2724 11th St NW for allegedly engaging in a pattern of neglect dating back many years and forcing tenants to live with long-term infestations of vermin, mold contamination, and a lack of heat, among other issues. The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) is seeking a receivership for the building, abatement of a public nuisance, restitution of rent payments for tenants, and penalties. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-files-suit-against-columbia-heights-landlord-housing-consumer>

April 25, 2017

### **Attorney General Racine Sues Company that Offers Rent-Controlled Apartments as Hotel Rooms**

WASHINGTON, D. C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine announced today that the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) Office of Consumer Protection has filed a lawsuit against a company that operates apartments like hotel rooms, including some apartments that are rent-controlled. The complaint also includes the owners and managers of four apartment complexes that are involved.

The OAG Office of Consumer Protection filed a complaint against Ginosi USA Corporation; its owner, Eric Ginosian; and the owners and managers of four apartment complexes in the

District: Daro Management Services, LLC; Daro Realty, LLC; Greystar Real Estate Partners, LLC; T-C Mass Court, LLC; Mill Creek Residential Trust LLC; and John Hancock Life Insurance Company USA. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-sues-company-offers-rent-controlled-apartments-hotel-rooms>

April 18, 2017

### **Attorney General Racine Gets \$250,000 Settlement with UTS Corporation in Notario Fraud Case**

WASHINGTON, D. C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine announced today that he has settled a lawsuit against Unlimited Technology and Solution Corporation (UTS) and its owner, Mardoqueo M. Sanchez, for engaging in unlawful immigrant-consultant services. The \$250,000 settlement in this so-called notario fraud case will provide restitution to consumers in immigrant communities, as well as civil penalties to the District.

Under the settlement, UTS and Sanchez are required to return the fees they collected from consumers for immigration services, which will amount to at least \$100,000. The settlement requires UTS and Sanchez to cooperate with a claims procedure that will be conducted by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to identify all of the consumers who are entitled to receive restitution under the settlement. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-gets-250000-settlement-uts-corporation-notario-fraud-case>

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## FLORIDA

April 20, 2017

### **Attorney General Bondi and OFR Commissioner Breakspear File Action Against Ocwen**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi and Florida Office of Financial Regulation Commissioner Drew J. Breakspear today filed a federal civil consumer protection lawsuit against Ocwen Financial Corporation of West Palm Beach and its subsidiaries, Ocwen Loan Servicing, LLC and Ocwen Mortgage Servicing, Inc., for mortgage servicing misconduct. According to the complaint, Ocwen harmed Floridians by filing illegal foreclosures, mishandling loan modifications, misapplying mortgage payments, failing to pay insurance premiums from escrow and collecting excessive fees. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/975B9DF2B52BB823852581080060D1A2>



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## ILLINOIS

April 06, 2017

### **MADIGAN SUES WOMAN FOR PROVIDING FRAUDULENT IMMIGRATION SERVICES**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a lawsuit against a Joliet woman alleging she defrauded at least four Illinois residents out of more than \$10,000 for unlicensed immigration counseling in violation of state consumer fraud and immigration services laws. Madigan filed the lawsuit in Cook County against Norma Bonilla, alleging she operated a scam to get immigrants to pay her thousands of dollars to obtain immigration statuses for which they were not actually eligible. Madigan alleges Bonilla is not a licensed attorney or employed by an immigration attorney or any agency authorized to provide immigration assistance services. Also, she also has never registered with the Attorney General's office, as required by state law. "This scam exploited immigrants at a time when many are seeking assistance due to the recent federal executive actions," Madigan said. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_04/20170406b.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_04/20170406b.html)

April 06, 2017

### **MADIGAN: COOK COUNTY ACCOUNTANT CHARGED WITH THEFT, TAX FRAUD & IDENTITY THEFT**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced the indictment of a Chicago accountant and tax preparer for allegedly defrauding the state out of nearly half a million dollars by forging state tax documents.

Oscar Garrett, 55, of Chicago, was charged in Cook County Circuit Court with identity theft, income tax evasion, theft of government property, money laundering, mail fraud, wire fraud and forgery. Garrett, an accountant who offered tax preparing services to clients, faces between six and 30 years in prison. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_04/20170406.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_04/20170406.html)

April 04, 2017

### **MADIGAN: CHAMPAIGN COUNTY MORTGAGE LOAN OFFICER SENTENCED FOR FRAUD**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced that a Rantoul man was sentenced to prison after pleading guilty in February to continuing financial crimes enterprise and stealing over \$100,000 in the process.

Brandon L. Jackson, 30, of Rantoul, was sentenced to four years in prison and two years of supervised release by Champaign County Circuit Court Judge Roger B. Webber. Jackson was also ordered to pay over \$106,000 in restitution to the victims of his cons.

During the course of the investigation, investigators discovered more than 15 victims mostly

from the Champaign area, ranging from individuals to financial institutions, who lost more than \$100,000. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_04/20170404.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_04/20170404.html)

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## KENTUCKY

April 19, 2017

### **Beshear: Settlement with LG&E, KU on Rate Proposal Decrease Saves Kentucky Ratepayers \$90 Million Annually**

FRANKFORT, KY. (April 19, 2017) – Attorney General Andy Beshear announced today that his Office of Rate Intervention has entered into a settlement with LG&E and KU that will save Kentucky ratepayers \$90 million annually – \$33.2 million of that for residential customers. Late last year, the utility companies proposed to the Public Service Commission a nearly \$210 million increase in annual revenues. After studying the rate proposal, Beshear proposed the PSC dramatically reduce the rate request.

Last week, Beshear’s office began working with the utilities on an agreement to lessen the annual revenue increase. The parties signed a settlement April 19 to limit the companies’ proposed increase and to provide certain other concessions. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=306>

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## MARYLAND

April 13, 2017

### **Queen Anne’s Co. Home Builder Ordered to Pay More Than \$425,000 for Consumer Protection Violations**

BALTIMORE, MD (April 13, 2017)–Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh’s announced today that his Consumer Protection Division issued a final order finding that Nexus EnergyHomes, Inc., a home builder from Queen Anne’s County, violated the Home Builder Registration Act, the Custom Home Protection Act, the New Home Deposits Act, and the Consumer Protection Act. The Order requires the builder to pay restitution of \$151,010.13, economic damages of \$235,567.60, penalties of \$32,000.00, and costs of \$6,446.10. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/041317.pdf>

April 13, 2017

**Attorney General Frosh: Consumer Protection Division Charges Prince George’s County Health Club with Violations of Health Club Services Law**

BALTIMORE, MD (April 13, 2017)—Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that his Consumer Protection Division has filed administrative charges against Fitness Motivators in an effort to stop the Prince George’s County health club from selling memberships until it complies with the state’s Health Club Services Law.

Fitness Motivators operated at 853 Brightseat Road in Hyattsville, MD until March 23, 2016. It reopened at 8741 D’Arcy Road in Forestville, MD without registering the new facility with the Division. The Division has filed administrative charges against Fitness Motivators, Inc. and its owner, Paul D. Adkins, for failing to register with the Division, failing to provide security to protect advance payments as required by Maryland’s Health Club law, and failing to provide required closing materials to the Division upon the closing of its facility. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/041317a.pdf>

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MASSACHUSETTS

April 28, 2017

**AG Healey Prohibits Unlawful Student Loan ‘Debt Relief’ Company From Doing Business in Massachusetts**

BOSTON – Attorney General Maura Healey has taken action against another student loan “debt relief” company that allegedly charged illegal fees to borrowers in Massachusetts. This case is the fourth in a series of enforcement actions brought against these companies by the AG’s Office.

Under the terms of the settlement, filed yesterday in Suffolk Superior Court, DFL International – which is based in Florida and did business as US Direct Student Loan Services – will refund 18 affected student loan borrowers and cease doing business in Massachusetts. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/2017-04-28-unlawful-student-loan-debt-relief-company.html>

April 24, 2017

**Roxbury Man Charged in Connection with Posing as a Real Estate Broker and Stealing from Potential Homebuyers**

BOSTON – A Roxbury man posing as a real estate broker has been charged in connection with stealing thousands of dollars from potential homebuyers in Boston, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today.

Cornell Mills, age 42, of Roxbury, was arraigned today in Suffolk Superior Court on the charges of Larceny Over \$250 (8 counts), Fiduciary Embezzlement (7 counts), Acting as a Broker without

a License (7 counts) and Being a Common and Notorious Thief (1 count). Mills pleaded not guilty to the charges.

The AG's Office began an investigation in 2016 after referrals from the Division of Professional Licensure and the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/2017-04-24-roxbury-man-arraigned.html>

April 11, 2017

### **Seniors to Receive More Than \$130,000 in Settlement With Insurance Agent and Mortgage Broker Over Deceptive Practices**

BOSTON – Massachusetts seniors will receive more than \$130,000 in refunds as a result of a settlement with a mortgage broker, its employee and an insurance agent that resolves claims they induced elderly clients to take out reverse mortgages and invest the proceeds in unsuitable variable annuities, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today.

This settlement resolves allegations from a lawsuit filed by AG Healey in August 2015 against mortgage broker Direct Finance Corp., its employee Daniel Matthews, and insurance agent James Moniz.

“We found that these defendants took advantage of elderly homeowners who spent decades building equity in their homes,” said AG Healey. “My office is focused on stopping the financial abuse of seniors.” ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/2017-04-11-seniors-settlement-insurance-mortgage-broker.html>

April 04, 2017

### **Insurance Company to Pay \$2.8 Million to Resolve Claims of Unlawful, Deceptive Sales of Health Insurance Sold Across State Lines**

BOSTON – A Kansas-based insurance company has agreed to pay more than \$2.8 million to settle allegations that it used deceptive and unlawful practices to sell health insurance to Massachusetts consumers, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today. The settlement will provide more than \$2.3 million to consumers. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/2017-04-04-insurance-company-to-pay-2-8-million.html>

April 04, 2017

### **AG Reaches Settlement with Advertising Company Prohibiting ‘Geofencing’ Around Massachusetts Healthcare Facilities**

BOSTON – A digital advertising company that was hired to use mobile geofencing technology to target women entering reproductive health facilities has been prohibited from doing so in

Massachusetts pursuant to a settlement announced today by Attorney General Maura Healey. Geofencing is a technology that allows digital advertising companies to direct advertisements to users through browsers and applications on their devices when those users are located in a designated territory. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/2017-04-04-copley-advertising-geofencing.html>

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## MICHIGAN

April 07, 2017

### **Schuette: Texas-based Fundraiser Faces 319,000 Civil Violations for Deceptively Operating Michigan Humane Society Clothing Donation Bins**

LANSING – Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today announced a Notice of Intended Action and Cease and Desist Order against for-profit clothing donation bin operator A.T.R.S. of Houston, Texas, alleging over 300,000 violations for falsely labeling the 251 clothing bins it operates for the Michigan Humane Society.

The A.T.R.S.-operated bins state that the Michigan Humane Society “receives 100% of the market value of every donation received at this location.” However, by contract, A.T.R.S. pays the Michigan Humane Society just \$.02 per pound. For 2016, donations to the bins generated \$835k in revenue for A.T.R.S., an average of \$.34 per pound; A.T.R.S. paid the Michigan Humane Society \$.02 per pound for these items, or \$49k, which equals just 6% of the market value of the donated clothes. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-408894--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-408894--,00.html)

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## MINNESOTA

April 23, 2017

### **AG Swanson Sues Unlicensed Debt Collection Company That Aggressively Pursued People For Fake Payday Loans**

Attorney General Lori Swanson today filed a lawsuit against Global Gateway Solutions, Inc., which operates call centers in Jamaica, for making unlicensed collection calls attempting to collect fake payday loan debts—or “phantom” debts—from Minnesotans who do not owe them.

“Phony collectors aggressively pursue collection of fake debts. These calls can be unsettling, but people shouldn’t be intimidated into paying a debt they don’t owe,” said Attorney General

Swanson. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/PressRelease/20160823GlobalGateway.asp>

April 12, 2017

### **Attorney General Swanson Sues Advertising Company That Solicited Payments From Minnesota Small Business Owners But Never Provided Promised Ads**

Attorney General Lori Swanson recently filed a lawsuit against Dads Fundraisers, Inc.—which also does business as Moms and Dads for Kids (“Dads”)—under Minnesota’s consumer protection laws. The lawsuit alleges that Dads solicited large payments from Minnesota small business owners for advertising services that it never subsequently provided. The company’s owner, Michael Gerken, is also named as a Defendant in the lawsuit.

The lawsuit alleges that Gerken and Dads fraudulently sold advertising space to Minnesota small business owners on coupon cards. Gerken told potential customers that coupon cards containing ads for their small business would be distributed by school sports teams and other youth groups in their local communities as part of fundraising efforts to support the groups’ activities. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/PressRelease/20170412\\_DadsFundraisers.asp](https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/PressRelease/20170412_DadsFundraisers.asp)

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## MISSOURI

April 13, 2017

### **AG Hawley Announces Felony Convictions in Storm Chasing Case**

Jefferson City, Mo. – Attorney General Josh Hawley’s Office has won felony convictions in the St. Louis area against a storm-chaser scam artist and his company. Jack Edward Jones and Countrywide Shingle & Siding, L.L.C. pleaded guilty to criminal charges and agreed to repay nearly \$100,000 in restitution to the twenty-three (23) Missourians defrauded by his scheme. Additionally, the Court ordered Jones to complete five (5) years of supervised probation, including the condition that Jones’ business bank account is subject to monitoring to prevent future fraud.

Jones admitted to multiple counts of stealing by deceit and violating the Missouri Merchandising Practices Act by taking up front payments and promising to repair roofs, but then disappearing. Jones was drawn to Missouri by severe hail storms in May 2011. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2017-news-archives/ag-hawley-announces-felony-convictions-in-storm-chasing-case>

April 06, 2017

### **AG Hawley Announces Restitution for Missourians and Civil Penalties in Case Against St. Louis Bankruptcy Business**

Jefferson City, Mo. – The Missouri Attorney General’s Office has reached agreement with St. Louis bankruptcy services provider, Critique Services, and its owner Beverly Diltz to resolve litigation alleging that Critique Services and Diltz defrauded Missouri consumers in the purchase of bankruptcy services. Under the Consent Judgment entered Tuesday, March 28, 2017 in St. Louis County Court, Critique Services and Diltz must repay over \$90,000 in restitution to over 150 of its former clients and civil penalties of \$25,000. The Consent Judgment also shuts the business down permanently and bars Critique Services and Diltz from advertising, offering, or performing bankruptcy services in Missouri again. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ago.mo.gov/home/news-archives/2017-news-archives/ag-hawley-announces-restitution-for-missourians-and-civil-penalties-in-case-against-st-louis-bankruptcy-business>

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## NEW HAMPSHIRE

April 05, 2017

### **Douglas Ring Pleads Guilty to Theft by Deception**

New Hampshire Deputy Attorney General Ann M. Rice announces that Douglas Ring, 43, of Charlestown, NH pleaded guilty today in Cheshire County Superior Court to 2 class-A misdemeanor charges of Theft by Deception.

In June 2015, Mr. Ring, doing business as Riverside Pools and Spas of Claremont, NH, accepted a \$12,000 deposit from a customer to order and install an in-ground swimming pool. Mr. Ring did not order the pool and instead used the deposit money to pay bills and expenses. When the customer asked for a refund, Mr. Ring lied and told the customer that the pool had been ordered and was on the truck for delivery. He did not provide any amount of refund to the customer. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.doj.nh.gov/media-center/press-releases/2017/20170405-douglas-ring.htm>

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## NEW JERSEY

April 20, 2017

### **New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs Files Complaint Against Contractor Alleging Fraud in Connection with Elevation 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 hired to perform home improvement and elevation projects on Superstorm Sandy-damaged houses used deceptive practices to obtain nearly

\$350,000 in federal relief funds from seven homeowners.

The complaint alleges that Coastal Restorations & Construction of New Jersey, along with Adam Nevius, Cole Nevius Jr. and Kimberly D. Atkinson violated the State's Consumer Fraud Act, the Contractors' Registration Act, the Regulations Governing Contractor Registration, the Regulations Governing Home Improvement Practices and the Regulations Governing General Advertising. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170420a.html>

April 13, 2017

**Insurance Agent and his Parents Charged with Fraud for Allegedly Providing Free, High-Value Life Insurance Policies in Order to Collect Commissions**

TRENTON – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor (“OIFP”) announced that a Monmouth County insurance agent and his parents have been charged with conspiracy and money laundering in an alleged scheme that provided insurance applicants with free life insurance and caused various insurance companies to disburse more than \$4 million in commissions.

Evan Pescatore, 35, of Highlands, and his parents Frank Pescatore, 70, and Janice Pescatore, 64, of Asbury Park, were charged with first-degree conspiracy to commit money laundering, and two-counts of second-degree money laundering in an indictment handed up by a state grand jury yesterday. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170413d.html>

April 05, 2017

**Insurance Agent Charged with Fraud for Allegedly Providing Free, High-Value Life Insurance Policies in Order to Collect Commissions**

TRENTON – Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino and the Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor (“OIFP”) announced that an insurance agent was charged today with insurance fraud, money laundering and theft by deception for allegedly providing co-conspirators with free life insurance to cause an insurance company to disburse more than \$200,000 in commissions.

Arthur Sinuk, 73, a New York City resident licensed to sell insurance in New Jersey, was indicted by a state grand jury today as the alleged ringleader in a scheme to provide free, high-value, life insurance policies with Allianz Life Insurance Company of North America (“Allianz”) to two co-conspirators and obtain commissions from Allianz. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170405a.html>



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## NEW MEXICO

April 26, 2017

### **AG Balderas Launches Investigation of National Cattle Industry for Unfair & Anticompetitive Practices Harming New Mexico Consumers and Family Businesses**

Las Cruces, NM – This week, Attorney General Hector Balderas announced a multi-pronged investigation to review unfair and anticompetitive practices in the national cattle industry that harm New Mexican families, and our ranchers and cattle farmers-- who are the backbone of New Mexico's economy. Family-owned farms and ranches that have been in operation for generations are vital to the health of New Mexico, which is why Attorney General Balderas is extremely concerned about the possibility of those businesses being threatened, especially by harmful regulatory practices and corporate entities that have no meaningful ties to New Mexico and no interest in the well-being of New Mexicans. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas\\_Launches\\_Investigation\\_of\\_National\\_Cattle\\_Industry.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas_Launches_Investigation_of_National_Cattle_Industry.pdf)

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## NEW YORK

April 28, 2017

### **Statement From Executive Deputy Attorney General For Economic Justice Manisha Sheth On Federal Ruling In Spectrum-Time Warner Cable Case**

NEW YORK – The following statement was issued today by Manisha Sheth, Executive Deputy Attorney General for Economic Justice, on behalf of the Office of the Attorney General: “We are pleased by the federal court’s decision returning our consumer fraud action against Spectrum-Time Warner Cable to state court, where we filed it and where it belongs. The federal ruling against Spectrum-Time Warner Cable upholds a vital principle: that an Internet service provider who cheats New Yorkers out of the Internet speeds and performance they were promised can face justice in a New York state court. With that issue resolved, we look forward to pressing ahead in state court and to continuing our effort to hold Spectrum-Time Warner Cable to account for what we allege was a deliberate and systematic scheme to defraud customers.”...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/statement-executive-deputy-attorney-general-economic-justice-manisha-sheth-federal>

April 26, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Arrest And Indictment Of Wall Street Financier Charged With Defrauding Multiple Victims And Stealing \$800,000**

NEW YORK—Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced today felony charges against Anthony Nyame, 59, of the Bronx, for allegedly stealing \$800,000 from multiple victims by fraudulently inducing them to believe his Wall Street based company, General Capital Corporation, had the ability to secure millions of dollars in loans. If convicted, Nyame faces up to 20 years in prison.

“The elaborate nature of this alleged scheme demonstrates just how shameless the defendant was in exploiting his victims,” said Attorney General Schneiderman. “It is unbelievable that there are some who would scam religious institutions for personal financial gain. We will not allow fraudsters to rip off New Yorkers, and those who do so will be held to account.” ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-arrest-and-indictment-wall-street-financier-charged>

April 24, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman, DA Gonzalez Announce The Indictments Of Nine Defendants For Stealing Over \$1 Million In Mortgage Fraud Scheme**

Defendants Are Alleged To Have Fraudulently Obtained Short-Sale Discounts And Loans By Submitting False Information To Mortgage Companies

Defendants Include Disbarred Attorney, Tax Preparer, New York City Department Of Investigation Investigator, And Loan Originator

New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, together with Acting Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez, today announced that nine individuals have been variously charged with money laundering, mortgage fraud, grand larceny, conspiracy, and other charges related to their participation in a scheme to defraud mortgage lenders that spanned two New York City boroughs and resulted in over \$1 million in ill-gotten mortgage loans. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-da-gonzalez-announce-indictments-nine-defendants-stealing-over-1>

April 21, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Settlements With 104 Auto Dealerships To Provide Notice Of Dangerous Safety Defects**

SYRACUSE—Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced today that he reached settlements with 104 auto dealerships that sold vehicles to New Yorkers without disclosing that the vehicles were under recall for dangerous unrepaired safety issues such as unintended acceleration, airbag problems, vehicle fires, steering and brake loss, and more. The settlement requires the auto dealers to provide consumers with advance notice of any existing and unrepaired recall, among other measures.

An investigation by the AG’s office found that while many prospective car buyers reasonably assume that any known and existing safety issues have been repaired or disclosed by the dealer, that is often not the reality of car buying in New York. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-settlements-104-auto-dealerships-provide-notice-dangerous>

April 20, 2017

**Operation Vandelay Industries: A.G. Schneiderman Announces Indictments In Three Counties, Charging Alleged Fake Architect With 58 Counts Of Larceny, Forgery, Fraud, And Unlicensed Practice Of Architecture**

NEW YORK STATE – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced today the unsealing of three indictments charging Paul J. Newman, President of Cohesion Studios, Inc., with defrauding construction companies, business owners, and municipalities throughout the Capital Region by pretending to be a licensed and registered architect.

The Attorney General’s investigation, “Operation Vandelay Industries,” revealed that Newman allegedly drafted architectural renderings for over 100 properties in Albany, Rensselaer, and Saratoga Counties. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/operation-vandelay-industries-ag-schneiderman-announces-indictments-three-counties>

April 06, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces Indictment Of NYC Landlord Dean Galasso For Mortgage Fraud**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced today that Dean Galasso, a New York City landlord with multiple properties in Manhattan and Queens, was indicted on six felony charges stemming from an alleged scheme to fraudulently obtain a multi-million-dollar mortgage to finance the purchase of a rental building. This indictment results from an investigation led by the Tenant Harassment Prevention Task Force (“Task Force”), the multi-agency task force, which was announced by Attorney General Schneiderman, Mayor de Blasio, and Governor Cuomo in February 2015. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-indictment-nyc-landlord-dean-galasso-mortgage-fraud>

April 06, 2017

**A.G. Schneiderman Announces \$100,000 Settlement With TRUSTe Over Flawed Privacy Certification Program For Popular Children’s Websites**

NEW YORK - Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced a settlement with True Ultimate Standards Everywhere, Inc. (“TRUSTe”), in connection with the company's failure to adequately prevent illegal tracking technology from surfacing on some of the nation's most popular children's websites. TRUSTe's failure to adequately assess its customers’ websites, which included Roblox.com and Hasbro.com, left underage visitors to those websites vulnerable to illegal tracking prohibited under the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection

Act (COPPA).

As part of the settlement, TRUSTe will pay a penalty of \$100,000 and adopt new measures to strengthen its privacy assessments. Today's settlement is the first time any state or federal law enforcement agency has taken action against the operator of a privacy certification program for children's websites. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-100000-settlement-truste-over-flawed-privacy-certification>

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## OHIO

April 27, 2017

### **Traveling Paving Contractors Accused of Ripping Off Southwest Ohio Consumers**

(CINCINNATI)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against two men accused of operating a driveway paving scheme affecting dozens of consumers in the Cincinnati and Dayton area.

The lawsuit accuses James C. Boswell and Edward Boswell of violating state consumer protection laws by failing to deliver promised services, performing shoddy work, and failing to notify consumers about their cancellation rights.

“We found that the defendants approached people at their homes, claimed to have leftover asphalt, and pressured consumers into paying for services,” Attorney General DeWine said. “Then they did minimal, shoddy work and left.” ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/April-2017/Traveling-Paving-Contractors-Accused-of-Ripping-Of>

April 24, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Seeks Consumer Restitution from Trash Removal Service**

(NEW PHILADELPHIA, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against the operators of a waste removal company accused of failing to deliver promised services to consumers in eastern Ohio.

The Attorney General's lawsuit accuses Firebird Waste & Recycling's operators, Michael Lohr and Shirley Bennett-Lohr, of collecting deposits from consumers but failing to provide promised trash removal services and failing to provide refunds.

According to the lawsuit, Firebird Waste & Recycling's principal place of business was 121 S. Romig St. in Uhrichsville, but it reportedly stopped operating in late 2016 and filed for bankruptcy in February 2017. ...

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

April 12, 2017

### **Attorney General DeWine Announces Lawsuit Against Charity Operator Accused of Identity Theft**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against a Columbus charity operator, who has been accused of stealing the identities of clients.

The lawsuit accuses Johnny R. Marcum and his organization, Central Ohio Sober Living, of violating Ohio charitable laws.

“Our investigation uncovered numerous problems with this organization,” Attorney General DeWine said. “We’re seeking a court order to dissolve the organization and to prevent its operator from ever running a charity in Ohio.”

Central Ohio Sober Living’s stated purpose was to provide sober support meetings, counseling, and housing, but law enforcement determined that Marcum had used clients’ personal information to open checking accounts and credit cards, which he allegedly used to make fraudulent transactions. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/April-2017/Attorney-General-DeWine-Announces-Lawsuit-Against>

April 12, 2017

### **Cleveland-Area Woman Agrees to Dissolve Nonprofit Following Problems**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced that a Berea woman has agreed to dissolve the nonprofit corporation she operated and never again form a charity in Ohio, after an investigation uncovered numerous problems with the organization. According to the agreement, the nonprofit Advanced Opportunities and Life Enrichment Inc. will be dissolved, and Judith O. Nagy will not hold any position as an officer, trustee, employee, or agent of a charity in Ohio.

Nagy was the principal operator of both Advanced Opportunities and a for-profit entity called New Hope Specialized Services. Both organizations had been certified to provide services to individuals with developmental disabilities but they lost their certification in 2014. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/April-2017/Cleveland-Area-Woman-Agrees-to-Dissolve-Nonprofit>

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## PENNSYLVANIA

April 24, 2017

### **Attorney General Shapiro Announces Settlement in Kickstarter Consumer Scam T-Shirt Case**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro has announced the office’s Bureau of Consumer Protection is settling a case against a suburban Philadelphia sports apparel business that raised \$579,000 online from more than 8,500 consumers to create athletic shirts that purportedly

changed colors in response to body temperatures – but failed to deliver the shirts as promised to many consumers.

Kenneth E. Crockett Jr., the founder of Radiate Athletics (“Radiate”), of West Chester, PA, launched a campaign on the crowdfunding site Kickstarter, promising to create a line of shirts that changed color in response to body heat in exchange for startup funding provided by consumers. Radiate’s initial goal was to raise \$30,000 to finance the shirts, which sold for \$35. But Crockett kept the Kickstarter campaign going until Radiate raised \$579,000 from 8,556 consumers. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=3286](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=3286)

April 05, 2017

**Pittsburgh woman charged with bilking seniors out of \$295,000 in Jamaican Lottery Scam**

PITTSBURGH — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced the arrest of a Pittsburgh woman on charges that she played a key role in bilking senior victims throughout the country out of \$295,000 in a Jamaican Lottery Scam. The victims thought they were paying taxes on their winnings in the lottery; instead, their money was being routed to scam artists in Jamaica. Agents from the Office of Attorney General’s Organized Crime Section, working with local police, today arrested Audrey Huff, 72, of the 300 block of Spencer Ave., and charged her with operating as the middle-woman — the Money Mule — in this version of the Jamaican Lottery Scam. Investigators charge that Huff collected and received money from elderly victims throughout the country through the mail, then made nearly 300 wire transfers totaling \$295,000 to her co-conspirator scam artists in Jamaica. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=3178](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=3178)

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## TENNESSEE

April 26, 2017

**Attorney General Files Lawsuit Against Predatory Law Firm Targeting Grieving Families**

Attorney General Herbert H. Slatery III today announced the filing of a lawsuit against a Texas law firm, its sole attorney, and two investigators working for the firm. The civil enforcement action, filed in Hamilton County Chancery Court, alleges The Witherspoon Law Group PLLC, based in Dallas, Texas has engaged in the unlawful solicitation of accident victims in Tennessee. The lawsuit names The Witherspoon Law Group, attorney Nuru Witherspoon, and investigators Alphonso McClendon and Glen Smith and alleges improper and unlawful contact with families of victims in a Chattanooga school bus crash. It is a violation of Tennessee law for attorneys to

solicit business within 30 days of a tragedy. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.tn.gov/attorneygeneral/news/50029>

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## WASHINGTON

April 05, 2017

### **AG Ferguson cracks down on illegal lease provisions targeting service members**

OLYMPIA — Attorney General Bob Ferguson announced today that a Portland, Ore.-based property management company must pay more than \$16,000 for requiring service members to sign illegal lease addendums requiring them to forfeit rent concessions if they had to terminate their leases early as a result of change of station or deployment.

CTL Management included the addendum on more than 220 leases at Chambers Creek Estates, a large apartment complex in University Place, near Joint Base Lewis-McChord, which houses many military families. Under the agreement, filed in Thurston County Superior Court, the company will refund a total of \$6,000 in rent concessions it illegally recouped from a total of 34 service members who were forced to cancel leases due to military service. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/ag-ferguson-cracks-down-illegal-lease-provisions-targeting-service-members>

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## Multistate Cases

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### Tobacco Settlement Funds

**Date:** April 28, 2017

**Details:** The tobacco companies remitted their regular annual Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) payments.

*Example Press Releases:* <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/iowa-receives-658-million-annual-tobacco-payment/>

<https://arkansasag.gov/media-center/news-releases/rutledge-state-receives-50-million-in-tobacco-settlement-funds>

[http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/04/20/ag-derek-schmidt-kansas-receives-\\$62-million-payment-from-tobacco-settlement](http://ag.ks.gov/media-center/news-releases/2017/04/20/ag-derek-schmidt-kansas-receives-$62-million-payment-from-tobacco-settlement)

<http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=308>

[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG\\_Balderas\\_Announces\\_Record\\_2454.251\\_Million\\_Tobacco\\_Settlement\\_Payment\\_Received\\_by\\_New\\_Mexico\\_1.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG_Balderas_Announces_Record_2454.251_Million_Tobacco_Settlement_Payment_Received_by_New_Mexico_1.pdf)

**States:** 46 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands (November 1998)

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## Anthem and Cigna Merger

**Date:** April 28, 2017

**Details:** The U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit affirmed the ruling of the D.C. District Court to enjoin Anthem's proposed acquisition of Cigna Corp. On July 21, 2016, Attorney General Schneiderman, the Department of Justice, ten other states, and the District of Columbia filed a joint lawsuit, which sought a court order to block the merger between the two companies, arguing that it would substantially lessen competition in the sale of commercial health insurance both nationally and in various local markets, including New York. On November 21, 2016, the plaintiffs proceeded to trial against Anthem and Cigna before U.S. District Court Judge Amy Berman Jackson of the D.C. District Court. Judge Jackson issued her opinion and order enjoining the proposed merger on February 8, 2017. The case is captioned United States et al. v. Anthem Inc. and Cigna Corp., and is docketed with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia under Civil Action Nos. 17- 5024 (L), 17- 5028 (Con.).

*Example Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/statement-ag-schneiderman-decision-regarding-merger-between-health-insurers-anthem-and>*

**Fed Agency:** U.S. Department of Justice

**States:** California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Connecticut, Georgia, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, Tennessee, and Virginia

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## Provigil Settlement

**Date:** April 18, 2017

**Details:** Attorney Generals urge those who paid for the brand-name drug Provigil or its generic Modafinil from June 24, 2006, to March 31, 2012 to file claims. A group of attorneys general were recently granted a request to extend the time to file claims on the settlement to June 25, 2017. The deadline to file claims was originally the middle of April. The settlement ends a multistate investigation into Cephalon, headquartered in Pennsylvania. Cephalon is a wholly owned subsidiary of Teva Pharmaceuticals.

*Example Press Release: <http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=304>*



**States:** Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming

**Website:** <http://www.stateagprovigilsettlement.com>

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## Lawsuit to Defend Federal Energy Efficiency Standards for Light Bulbs

**Date:** April 3, 2017

**Details:** On Friday, March 31, Attorney General Becerra joined eight fellow Attorneys General in filing a petition in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit challenging the Department's delay in issuing its Energy Conservation Standard for Ceiling Fans. The Department of Energy has estimated that over a thirty-year period this standard would save enough electricity to power between 10 and 35 million U.S. households for a year. The Standard for Ceiling Fans should have gone into effect on March 20, 2017, but has now been delayed twice by the Department of Energy.

*Example Press Release:* <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-xavier-becerra-energy-efficiency-standards-worth-fighting>

**Fed Agency:** U.S. Department of Energy

**States:** New York, California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Oregon, Vermont, Washington

**Additional:** Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, City of New York

### Documents:

Petition for Review:

[https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press\\_releases/2017%2003%2031%20Petition%20and%20Rules%20FINAL.pdf?](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press_releases/2017%2003%2031%20Petition%20and%20Rules%20FINAL.pdf?)

Notice Letter:

[https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press\\_releases/2017\\_04\\_03\\_notice\\_letter\\_and\\_appendices\\_final.pdf?](https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/attachments/press_releases/2017_04_03_notice_letter_and_appendices_final.pdf?)

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## Western Union Settlement

April 12, 2017

### **Attorney General Xavier Becerra Announces Settlement With Western Union For Wire Fraud Scams, Encourages Victims to Come Forward**

SACRAMENTO – Attorney General Xavier Becerra announced today that California has joined a multistate settlement with Western Union, which resolves an investigation that focused on complaints by consumers who used the financial institution’s wire transfer service to inadvertently send money to third parties involved in schemes to defraud consumers.

Western Union has agreed to pay \$586 million to provide refunds to victims through a related, but separate, agreement with the Federal Trade Commission and U.S. Department of Justice filed in January. Under the terms of the federal settlement, California consumers who made a wire transfer through Western Union between January 1, 2004 and January 19, 2017 may be eligible for more than \$65 million in refunds. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-xavier-becerra-announces-settlement-western-union-wire-fraud>

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## Medicaid Fraud

### ALABAMA

April 21, 2017

### **AG MARSHALL ANNOUNCES CONVICTION OF OWNER OF JEFFERSON COUNTY COUNSELING SERVICE FOR MEDICAID FRAUD AND THEFT**

(MONTGOMERY)--Attorney General Steven T. Marshall announced the conviction of Victor Paul Williams, 59, of Leeds, for filing false claims with the Alabama Medicaid Agency and theft of property in the first degree. Williams was found guilty today by a jury in Montgomery County Circuit following a two-day trial before Circuit Judge Greg Griffin. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ago.state.al.us/News-1039>

April 17, 2017

### **DOTHAN WOMAN SENTENCED FOR MEDICAID FRAUD**

(MONTGOMERY) – Catrina R. Copeland, 43, of Dothan, Alabama, was sentenced to five months in prison and five months of home confinement on Wednesday, April 12, 2017 for defrauding the Alabama Medicaid Agency and the federal government, announced Acting U.S. Attorney A. Clark Morris, Alabama Attorney General Steven T. Marshall, and Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General Special Agent in Charge Derrick L. Jackson. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ago.state.al.us/News-1032>

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## ALASKA

April 17, 2017

### **Anchorage Dentist Criminally Charged for Defrauding the Alaska Medicaid Program, Diverting Funds from his Prior Employers, and Unlawful Dental Acts**

The Alaska Department of Law, Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU), announced today that 31 year-old Dr. Seth Lookhart was charged with 10 felony offenses consisting of medical assistance fraud, theft in the second degree, and scheme to defraud. The information further alleges that Dr. Lookhart committed numerous misdemeanor offenses for medical assistance fraud and unlawful dental acts. Dr. Lookhart's office manager, thirty-two year old Shauna Cranford, was also charged with the same felony offenses and six of the seven misdemeanor offenses. Dr. Lookhart's corporation, Lookhart Dental, LLC., D/B/A Clear Creek Dental, LLC., was also charged with the same felony offenses and three misdemeanor offenses of medical assistance fraud. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.law.state.ak.us/press/releases/2017/041717-MFCU-Lookhart.html>

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## FLORIDA

April 27, 2017

### **Hillsborough County Woman Arrested for Abuse of a Disabled Adult**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office today arrested a Hillsborough County resident for abusing a disabled adult. Erica R. Reid, 24, is a former employee of NeuroRestorative Florida, a Medicaid funded facility in Lutz. The facility houses a number of developmentally disabled residents. According to the MFCU investigation, Reid became upset with the behavior of one of the disabled residents and shoved the resident in the back, causing the victim to fall to the floor. NeuroRestorative Florida terminated Reid's employment. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/8910400343F148BC8525810F0053859C>

April 10, 2017

### **UPDATE: Two More Arrested in Medicaid Fraud Scheme**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, the Leon County Sheriff's Office and the Seminole County Sheriff's Office today announced the arrests of Danielle Richardson, 42, and Vickram Thakur, 50, in connection to a Medicaid fraud scheme. Richardson and Thakur are former employees of DS Connections, Inc., a targeted case management company headquartered in Winter Park, with offices in Clermont and Tallahassee. These two arrests are the ninth and tenth arrests of former DS Connections employees since

January 2015 for Medicaid fraud. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

<http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/C58D6A45C98AEF40852580FE0064D5CB>

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## GEORGIA

April 13, 2017

**Attorney General Chris Carr Announces Two Sentenced for Medicaid Fraud in Cobb County**

ATLANTA, GA – The Office of the Attorney General today announced that Demario Phillips and Pamela Baker pled guilty to Medicaid Fraud in Cobb County Superior Court.

“The public relies upon the honesty and integrity of individuals who participate in the Georgia Medicaid program,” said Attorney General Chris Carr. “Those who violate that trust will be prosecuted, and I applaud the efforts of our Medicaid Fraud Control Unit for investigating and prosecuting this case. We believe that their efforts to seek justice on behalf of Georgia citizens are reflected in Judge Flournoy’s sentence.” ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2017-04-13/attorney-general-chris-carr-announces-two-sentenced-medicaid-fraud-cobb>

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## KENTUCKY

April 21, 2017

**Beshear: Somerset Doctor Receives 5-Year Sentence on Medicaid Fraud**

FRANKFORT, KY. (April 21, 2017) – Attorney General Andy Beshear today announced that a Somerset doctor was sentenced to five years in prison and ordered to pay more than \$10,000 in restitution.

Dr. Ezekiel O. Akande, 58, of Somerset, was sentenced today by Pulaski Circuit Court Judge David A. Tapp.

A Somerset jury convicted Dr. Akande at trial in March for Medicaid fraud, a Class D felony, and theft by unlawful taking over \$10,000, a Class C felony.

Akande, who operated the Somerset Regional Pain Center LLC, stood trial for receiving payment from Kentucky’s Medicaid Program for tobacco cessation counseling he did not perform. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=310>

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## LOUISIANA

April 28, 2017

### **Attorney General Jeff Landry Makes Three Medicaid Fraud Arrests**

BATON ROUGE, LA - Attorney General Jeff Landry today announced the arrests of three on Medicaid fraud charges.

“My office, using the resources we have, is working tirelessly to combat Medicaid fraud and arrest those who commit it,” said Attorney General Jeff Landry. “It is frustrating to me and my staff that people defraud programs created to help our State’s most vulnerable; and I will continue to fight against this type of criminal activity.”

Chantay Carter, 44 of Kentwood, was arrested on six counts of Medicaid Fraud for allegedly overlapping her billing for payment. Carter was employed by the Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff’s Office (TPSO) and submitted timesheets for her work as a provider at the same time she was working at the TPSO Jail. Carter was booked into the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ag.state.la.us/Article/2405/5>

April 19, 2017

### **Attorney General Jeff Landry Arrests Two for Medicaid Fraud**

BATON ROUGE, LA - Attorney General Jeff Landry today announced the arrests of two women on Medicaid Fraud charges, whose alleged crimes costed the State over \$10,000.

“My office will not rest in our pursuit of those who rob much needed services from our State’s most vulnerable,” said Attorney General Jeff Landry. “Our award winning fraud detection and prevention unit remains committed to uncovering, investigating, and arresting those who attempt to defraud the system.” ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://www.ag.state.la.us/Article/2401/5>

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## MARYLAND

April 18, 2017

### **Complete Family Care, P.C. Pays \$250,000 to Settle Medicaid Fraud**

BALTIMORE, MD (April 18, 2017)—Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that Complete Family Care, P.C., a Takoma Park primary care practice owned by Suresh Khetan, M.D. and his wife Renu Khetan, paid \$250,000 to the State of Maryland to resolve allegations that the practice engaged in a fraudulent billing scheme to increase profits.

The settlement stems from an investigation which found that, over a five-year period, Complete Family Care routinely billed Medicaid for complex blood removals and visual examinations with high reimbursement rates while actually performing only simple blood draws and eye tests with

far lower reimbursement rates. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/041817.pdf>

April 14, 2017

**Carroll County Personal Care Service Provider Pleads Guilty to Felony Medicaid Fraud**

BALTIMORE, MD (April 14, 2017)—Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that Elizabeth Imhoff, 55, of Mount Airy, MD, pled guilty on April 12, 2017 to one count of Medicaid Fraud.

During the period January 2014 through January 2016, Imhoff submitted false claims to the Maryland Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid) in connection with the care of her paraplegic son. Specifically, Imhoff submitted claims that she was caring for her son in Maryland while she was on vacation in Florida and during the day while she was at work in Virginia.

Medicaid Fraud is a felony punishable by a maximum sentence of 5 years incarceration and a \$100,000 fine. Sentencing is scheduled for August 15, 2017, in the Circuit Court for Frederick County, Maryland. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/041417.pdf>

April 04, 2017

**Frederick County Physician to Pay \$450,000 to State of Maryland for Medicaid Fraud**

BALTIMORE, MD (April 4, 2017) - Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced today that Sabiha Mohiuddin, M.D., a primary care physician practicing in Frederick, Maryland, has paid \$450,000 to the State of Maryland to resolve allegations that she engaged in a fraudulent billing scheme to increase profits.

Mohiuddin owns and operates a primary care practice serving Medicaid recipients. The settlement stems from a civil complaint filed in the Circuit Court for Frederick County, wherein Maryland alleged that from January, 2007 through February, 2014, Mohiuddin engaged in a scheme of billing routine doctor's visits at a higher level of care than was provided to increase reimbursement from the Maryland Medicaid Program. Mohiuddin, without an admission of liability, agreed to pay \$450,000 to settle the lawsuit. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/040417.pdf>

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## NEVADA

April 28, 2017

**Attorney General Laxalt Announces Sentencing of Meadow Valley Pharmacy Manager for Insurance and Medicaid Fraud of \$1.5 Million**

Carson City, NV – Today, Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt announced that Angela

Walker, 45, of Caliente, was sentenced for insurance and Medicaid fraud. Walker previously pleaded guilty to the felonies for her role in defrauding insurance companies by billing for large amounts of compound pharmaceutical prescriptions that were rarely provided as billed to the patients or prescribed by a physician. Walker was the pharmacy manager at Meadow Valley Pharmacy (MVP) located in Caliente, Nevada. The head pharmacist, Adam Katschke, was convicted in January 2017 for his role in the fraud conducted at MVP. The fraudulent acts were committed between April 2013 and April 2015. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney\\_General\\_Laxalt\\_Announces\\_Sentencing\\_of\\_Meadow\\_Valley\\_Pharmacy\\_Manager\\_for\\_Insurance\\_and\\_Medicaid\\_Fraud\\_of\\_\\$1\\_5\\_Million/](http://ag.nv.gov/News/PR/2017/Attorney_General_Laxalt_Announces_Sentencing_of_Meadow_Valley_Pharmacy_Manager_for_Insurance_and_Medicaid_Fraud_of_$1_5_Million/)

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## NEW MEXICO

April 07, 2017

### **AG Balderas Announces Indictments on Taos County Sheriff's Deputy for Medicaid Fraud, Falsification of Documents & Perjury**

Taos, NM – This morning, Attorney General Hector Balderas announced that a Taos County grand jury returned indictments on Ricky Romero for one count of Medicaid Fraud, ten counts of Falsification of Documents and ten counts of Perjury. The Office of the Attorney General is focused on preparing the case for trial. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG\\_Balderas\\_Announces\\_Indictments\\_on\\_Taos\\_County\\_Sheriff%E2%80%99s\\_Deputy\\_for\\_Medicaid\\_Fraud\\_\\_Falsification\\_of\\_Documents\\_\\_\\_Perjury.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/AG_Balderas_Announces_Indictments_on_Taos_County_Sheriff%E2%80%99s_Deputy_for_Medicaid_Fraud__Falsification_of_Documents___Perjury.pdf)

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## NEW YORK

April 21, 2017

### **A.G. Announces Indictment Of Brooklyn Dentist For Allegedly Billing Medicaid For Dental Work Performed By Unlicensed Individuals**

NEW YORK—Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today announced the indictment, arrest, and arraignment of Joseph Shyknevsky, 46, of Brooklyn, and four other individuals on charges related to an alleged scheme to defraud Medicaid. It is charged that Shyknevsky, a licensed dentist, hired individuals with no dental license, allowed them to perform dental work on Medicaid recipients, and billed the State for the dental work performed by those unlicensed individuals. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-announces-indictment-brooklyn-dentist-allegedly-billing-medicaid-dental-work>

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## OHIO

April 28, 2017

### **Dayton Man, Company Ordered to Pay \$1.4 Million**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)— Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine announced today that a Dayton-area certified alcohol and drug outpatient treatment provider and its owner have been ordered to pay more than \$1.4 million after an investigation by the Ohio Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit found that the provider billed for services that were never actually provided. The investigation found that between August 10, 2012 and December 31, 2015, The Morrow Group, LLC, by and through its owner Clifford Morrow, 68, of Dayton, intentionally billed and obtained money by deception from the Ohio Department of Medicaid for services not rendered and/or not authorized. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/April-2017/Dayton-Man-Company-Ordered-to-Pay-\\$1-4-Million](http://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Media/News-Releases/April-2017/Dayton-Man-Company-Ordered-to-Pay-$1-4-Million)

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## RHODE ISLAND

April 06, 2017

### **Attorney General Peter Kilmartin Warns Consumers of Medicare Fraud Scam**

After being alerted that Rhode Island Medicare patients were receiving phone calls from someone claiming to be a representative of "HealthSource" requesting personal information including patients' Medicare number, Attorney General Peter F. Kilmartin is warning Rhode Islanders that these phone calls are a scam and to remind consumers to never provide Medicare ID information to anyone over the telephone.

According to reports, a male has called Medicare enrollees and stated he was calling on behalf of HealthSource RI. The phone number that appears on caller ID is a 401-area code.

The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Unit and Insurance Advocate confirmed with HealthSource RI that the agency never contacts customers via telephone to ask for such information. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.ri.gov/press/view/30057>



## Consumer Advocacy

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### Corinthian College Student Loan Forgiveness

**Date:** April 28, 2017

**Details:** Attorney General Marshall is joining with the Attorneys General of at least 43 other states and the District of Columbia, in an effort to notify affected students and provide them with information about the procedures for cancellation of their federal student loans. The campuses operated by Corinthian Colleges, Inc., which were attended by students in Alabama are Everest Institute, Everest University and Wyotech.

*Example Press Release: <http://www.ago.state.al.us/News-1050>*

**Fed Agency:** U.S. Department of Education

**States:** 44 States and the District of Columbia

**Additional Information:** The Attorney General's Office will not have additional information, but students may refer to the website [www.corinthianoutreach.com](http://www.corinthianoutreach.com), contact the U.S. Department of Education through its hotline at 1-855-279-6207 or e-mail questions about discharge of their federal student loans to [FSAOperations@ed.gov](mailto:FSAOperations@ed.gov).

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### Opposing Rollback Of Air Quality Standards

**Date:** April 26, 2017

**Details:** Attorneys General Urge Congress To Block Legislation That Would Delay Ozone Standards And Undermine The Clean Air Act – Marking A Major Step Backwards In Combatting Pollution And Its Public Health Impacts.

*Example Press Release: <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-leads-coalition-16-attorneys-general-opposing-rollback-air-quality>*

**States:** New York, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia, as well as the Acting Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

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## Opposition to Rollback of Student Loan Protections

**Date:** March 31, 2017

**Details:** California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today called out the U.S. Department of Education for abdicating its responsibility to millions of student loan borrowers and their families across the country. Today's multistate letter opposes action by the Department of Education to revoke critical reforms designed to help students avoid default and curtail loan servicer misconduct. Joined by 20 attorneys general and the Office of Consumer Protection of Hawaii, the letter to Education Secretary Betsy DeVos opposes the Department's recent rollback of guidance intended to protect student loan borrowers and reform the student loan servicing industry.

*Example Press Release: <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-xavier-becerra-it%E2%80%99s-foolish-roll-back-student-loan-servicing>*

**Fed Agency:** Department of Education

**States:** Massachusetts, Illinois, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia, as well as the Executive Director of the Office of Consumer Protection of Hawaii.

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## Attorneys General Urge Department of Labor to Lift Fiduciary Rule Delay

**Date:** April 18, 2017

**Details:** Attorney General Tom Miller Monday led a group of eight attorneys general in urging the U.S. Department of Labor to lift its delay in implementing a rule that would prohibit financial advisors from sacrificing clients' best interests for their own. The investment advice fiduciary rule was set to take effect April 10, but the Department of Labor delayed it by 60 days to June 9. On February 3, President Donald Trump ordered the agency to review the fiduciary rule "to determine whether it may adversely affect the ability of Americans to gain access to retirement information and financial advice."

*Example Press Release: <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/newsroom/miller-attorneys-general-urge-department-of-labor-to-lift-fiduciary-rule-delay>*

**Fed Agency:** Department of Labor

**States:** Iowa, Hawaii, Illinois, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, plus the District of Columbia

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## Attorney Generals Urge Preservation of Protections for Consumers Who Use Prepaid Cards

**Date:** March 31, 2017

**Details:** Attorney General Karl A. Racine is leading a multistate coalition of attorneys general from the District and 17 states in opposing three resolutions before Congress (S.J. Res.19, H.J. Res. 62 and H.J. Res. 73), each of which would derail crucial protections for millions of consumers who use prepaid debit cards. The coalition sent a letter to congressional leadership urging them to oppose the resolutions, which block implementation of a rule the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) first considered in May 2012; the rule is scheduled to go into effect on April 1, 2018.  
*Example Press Release: <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-asks-congress-preserve-protections-consumers-who-use-prepaid-cards>*

**Fed Agency:** Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

**States:** California, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

**Letter:**

[https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/oag/publication/attachments/Ltr%20to%20Congress%20re%20CFPB%20Prepaid%20Card%20Rule.Final\\_.pdf](https://oag.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/oag/publication/attachments/Ltr%20to%20Congress%20re%20CFPB%20Prepaid%20Card%20Rule.Final_.pdf)

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## CALIFORNIA

April 13, 2017

### **Attorney General Xavier Becerra Urges Acting U.S. Labor Secretary Hugler To Put The Interests of Consumers Above Those Of Retirement Advisors**

SACRAMENTO – Attorney General Xavier Becerra today urged Acting U.S. Secretary of Labor Edward Hugler to immediately implement the “fiduciary” conflict of interest rule, which would require those who provide retirement investment advice to put the interests of their clients above their own financial gain. Under current rules, which went into effect 40 years ago, many such advisors are only subject to a "suitability" standard, which allows them to choose investments that make more money for them, rather than what is best for their clients. Creating a fiduciary conflict of interest rule makes it clear that the retirement advisor’s legal responsibility is solely to the clients they are advising. The rule was scheduled to go into effect on April 10, but has been delayed by the Trump Administration. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-xavier-becerra-urges-acting-us-labor-secretary-hugler-put>

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## DELAWARE

April 06, 2017

### **AG's Fraud and Consumer Protection Division Urges Delaware Consumers To Be On Guard Against IRS Scams And Other Financial Frauds**

With tax season here, the Fraud and Consumer Protection Division of Attorney General Matt Denn's office warns Delaware consumers and employers to be on guard against fake IRS phone call scams and IRS Form W-2 email phishing scams that are targeting employers, including retail businesses, school districts, nonprofit organizations, and law firms.

#### IRS Phone Call Scam

In a typical IRS phone scam, a caller pretends to work for the Internal Revenue Service (or sometimes the U.S. Treasury Department), and tells the intended victim that the IRS will imminently be filing suit against the victim, or threatens the intended victim with arrest or some other kind of punishment, and the only way to avoid the lawsuit or arrest is to immediately pay a sum of money, usually via a pre-paid debit card or a money order, or even an iTunes gift card. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://news.delaware.gov/2017/04/06/irs/>

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## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

April 24, 2017

### **Attorney General's Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Proposal Focuses on Protecting Vulnerable District Residents and Taxpayer Funds**

WASHINGTON, D. C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today released his Fiscal Year 2018 budget proposal, which focuses on improving public safety, protecting at-risk residents, and ensuring that the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) continues to serve the District as a first-in-class public law firm. OAG is a net revenue-generating agency, contributing more than \$597 million to the District in FY 2016—far more than it cost District taxpayers to run the agency. OAG's FY 2017 budget proposal includes a modest increase over FY 2017 levels, an investment that would equip OAG to better protect both taxpayer funds and the public interest. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general%E2%80%99s-fiscal-year-2018-budget-proposal-focuses-protecting-vulnerable-district>

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## GEORGIA

April 03, 2017

### **Attorney General Chris Carr to Celebrate Financial Literacy Month in April**

ATLANTA, GA – As April is Financial Literacy Month, Attorney General Chris Carr is inviting Georgians to explore related resources available through the Office of the Attorney General's

digital platforms.

“We believe that providing additional resources to increase financial literacy will put all Georgians in a much better position should they face economic challenges,” said Attorney General Chris Carr. “ConsumerEd.com was developed by the Office of the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Unit to educate Georgians on how to make smart financial decisions. It contains tools and information on saving and investing, creating a budget, understanding your credit score, managing debt, buying a home, purchasing a vehicle and protecting yourself from identity theft. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://law.georgia.gov/press-releases/2017-04-03/attorney-general-chris-carr-celebrate-financial-literacy-month-april>

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## ILLINOIS

April 27, 2017

### **MADIGAN CONDEMNS ROLLBACK OF NET NEUTRALITY RULES INTENDED TO KEEP INTERNET OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL**

Chicago Attorney General Lisa Madigan today condemned the FCC Chairman’s proposal to roll back existing net neutrality rules that would allow internet service providers to charge customers for accessing certain types of content over others.

Eliminating net neutrality rules could result in:

- Consumers being unable or forced to pay to access certain websites;
- Decreased competition as start-ups fight for access with larger, established companies; and
- Telecommunications companies that also own media companies giving preferential treatment to media content they own, putting smaller content providers and their customers at a disadvantage. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017\\_04/20170427b.html](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2017_04/20170427b.html)

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## KENTUCKY

April 25, 2017

### **Member banks working with AG’s Office of Senior Protection**

FRANKFORT, KY. (April 25, 2017) – Attorney General Andy Beshear and the Kentucky Bankers Association (KBA) are teaming up to protect seniors statewide from financial exploitation by scam artists.

This is the latest in a series of partnerships Beshear has announced aimed at preventing scams targeting seniors. His office most recently announced a partnership with Kentucky's faith-based community to help educate its senior ministries and the communities they serve on potential scams. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=313>

April 18, 2017

### **Utility Scam Phone Calls Targeting Customers in Kentucky**

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 18, 2017) – Today Attorney General Andy Beshear issued a Scam Alert to warn Kentuckians of reports of suspicious calls being made to utility customers in southeastern Kentucky.

Kentuckians in Harlan, London and Pineville reported receiving a call from someone claiming to be a utility company employee who asks for a utility bill payment over the phone. If the customer refuses to pay immediately, the scammer threatens to shut off the customer's electricity.

"One of our top priorities is to help protect Kentuckians, especially senior citizens, from scams by warning them of the latest scams and providing tips on how to identify each scam," Beshear said. "The best way to avoid this utility scam is to contact the utility company directly and verify any billing questions." ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=305>

April 03, 2017

### **Beshear: Door-to-Door Scammers Doubling Down this Spring**

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 3, 2017) – Today Attorney General Beshear said a possible ring of door-to-door scammers have recently targeted the Louisville-area, with one household losing more than \$70,000 over the past year.

The current scam involves someone coming door-to-door claiming to offer services related to home improvement, or simply requesting financial aid for their "business." Once the victim makes a payment, the con artist makes-off with the money.

Then, a second con artist, likely connected to the first, comes along pretending to be an Adult Protective Services employee and claims they provide "scam recovery services" for a fee. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=293>

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## MARYLAND

April 11, 2017

### **Attorney General Frosh Applauds Passage of 2017 Legislative Priorities**

BALTIMORE, MD (April 11, 2017) – Following the conclusion of the 2017 Legislative Session, Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh commended members of the General Assembly for passage of several pieces of legislation that protect the health, financial security, personal security and public safety of Marylanders.

“Working together with advocates and members of the General Assembly, we made great progress this year protecting Marylanders from prescription drug price gouging, and ensuring fairness in our bail system,” said Attorney General Frosh. “I appreciate the hard work of the members of the legislature in granting the Office of Attorney General the authority to act on behalf of Marylanders to protect our environment, the healthcare of our citizens, and the threat of other potentially harmful federal actions.” ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/041117.pdf>

April 10, 2017

### **Attorney General Frosh Applauds Members of General Assembly on Passage of Generic Drug Price Gouging Legislation**

BALTIMORE, MD (April 10, 2017) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today commended members of the Maryland General Assembly after passage of HB 631. The legislation authorizes the Attorney General’s Office to take legal action to stop price gouging by corporations selling off-patent or generic drugs.

“When a drug company doubles or triples - or multiplies by 50 - the price of medication, it imperils the health and finances of patients and their families, and it threatens public health,” said Attorney General Frosh. “I applaud the members of the General Assembly for enacting HB 631. The new law will give Maryland a necessary tool to combat unjustified and extreme price increases for medicines that have long been on the market and that are essential to our health and well-being.”

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2017/041017.pdf>

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## MASSACHUSETTS

April 21, 2017

### **AG’s Office Opens Grant Application Period for Local Consumer Mediation Programs**

BOSTON — Attorney General Maura Healey today opened the application period for grant funding for local mediation programs across the state through the Local Consumer Aid Fund Grants (LCAF).

As part of its services to consumers, the AG's Office uses settlement funds to provide grants to

a statewide network of Face-to-Face Mediation Programs. These programs provide in-person mediation services to support the resolution of issues like consumer, landlord, and tenant disputes. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/2017-04-21-grant-local-consumer-programs.html>

April 19, 2017

### **AG Healey Convenes Health Care Experts for Advisory Task Force on Hospital, HMO Community Benefits Guidelines**

BOSTON – Attorney General Maura Healey today convened health care experts for the first meeting of an advisory task force to examine potential updates to the office’s guidelines for the community benefits that Massachusetts health care institutions provide to residents. The Advisory Task Force on Community Benefits will review the AG’s Community Benefits Program to advise on what updates should be made to the program for hospitals and health maintenance organizations (HMOs). The task force members will discuss strategies for advancing statewide health priorities as well as develop recommendations for streamlining reporting requirements for participating institutions. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/2017-04-19-health-care-community-benefits.html>

April 11, 2017

### **AG Healey Urges the DPU to Deny a Proposed \$68 Million Increase for Ratepayers in Western Massachusetts**

PITTSFIELD – Advocating on behalf of 200,000 ratepayers in Western Massachusetts, Attorney General Maura Healey testified tonight before the Department of Public Utilities (DPU), urging it to reject a request by Eversource to increase electric rates for customers of the Western Massachusetts Electric Company (WMECo) by \$68 million over the next five years.

“My job in this case, as it is in all rate cases, is to represent WMECo customers and ensure that they are receiving safe and reliable electric service at the lowest possible cost,” AG Healey told the DPU at a hearing in Pittsfield. “When so many customers in Western Massachusetts are struggling to make ends meet and businesses are trying to lower their energy costs to maintain and grow jobs, it is time to return money to customers not to raise their electric bills to benefit a highly profitable utility company.” ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/opposing-proposed-68-million-increase-for-ratepayers.html>



April 05, 2017

### **AG Healey Warns of Addiction Treatment Scams That Refer Patients to Inadequate Out-of-State Facilities**

BOSTON – After receiving multiple reports of Massachusetts residents seeking addiction treatment being recruited to centers across the country, Attorney General Maura Healey has issued an advisory warning people of scams that leave them without real care.

Recruiters often use texts or social media to recruit patients to centers in Arizona, California or Florida, and offer to pay for airfare and health insurance to cover the costs of out-of-state treatment.

According to some reports, many of these out-of-state centers provide little or no treatment to patients. In other instances, the recruiters have stopped paying insurance premiums, which has resulted in patients getting removed from treatment facilities and stranded without access to housing, health care, or the financial resources to return to Massachusetts. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2017/2017-04-05-addiction-treatment-scams.html>

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## MICHIGAN

April 18, 2017

### **Schuette: How to Spot IRS Debt Collection Scams**

LANSING – Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today announced new tips on how to avoid falling prey to a debt collection scam in light of the IRS's announcement that it will begin using private debt collectors to collect back taxes.

The new program, authorized by Congress in December 2015, allows private debt collection agencies to collect overdue taxes on behalf of the IRS. Taxpayers being assigned to a private collections agency have already received numerous contacts from the IRS, and have not yet resolved overdue taxes. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-409682--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-409682--,00.html)

April 17, 2017

### **Schuette Releases "After the Disaster" Consumer Alert to Recognize Severe Weather Awareness Week**

LANSING – Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today recognized the start of Severe Weather Awareness Week by releasing a new After the Disaster consumer alert providing Michigan residents with tips to avoid be scammed after a severe weather event.

“While most business and charities act with the utmost professionalism and ethics, there are some bad apples who chose to take advantage of another’s misfortune,” said Schuette. “I urge

residents to look at this consumer alert before severe weather strikes.” ...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-409554--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-409554--,00.html)

April 10, 2017

### **Schuetz: Professional Fundraisers Kept Over 60% of Michigan Charitable Donations in 2016**

LANSING – Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuetz today announced the publication of his 5th Annual Professional Fundraising Charitable Solicitation Report. Released annually each spring, this report identifies the total amount raised by professional fundraisers soliciting for charities in Michigan.

The report also reveals the percentage of money raised going to the fundraiser and the percentage going to the charity. In 2016, 61 percent of funds raised by professional fundraisers reporting in Michigan went to the fundraisers. For context, the Better Business Bureau’s fundraising standard says that fundraising spending should not exceed 35 percent. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849\\_47203-408953--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-164-46849_47203-408953--,00.html)

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## NEW HAMPSHIRE

April 07, 2017

### **Scam Alert - New Hampshire Nail Salons the Targets of a Phone Scam**

Deputy Attorney General Ann M. Rice and Peter Danles, Executive Director of the Office of Professional Licensure and Certification, have issued a scam alert to all owners of manicuring or nail salons about a phone scam that is currently underway targeting them. The scam caller falsely claims that the call originates from the Cosmetology Board and asks for credit card information in order to perform a mandated inspection.

The Cosmetology Board does not charge a fee or require credit card information to perform an inspection. Any salon owner receiving one of these calls is encouraged to call the Cosmetology Board before providing any payment information. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://www.doj.nh.gov/media-center/press-releases/2017/20170407-scam-alert-nail-salon.htm>

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## NEW JERSEY

April 06, 2017

### **New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs Enforces State Kosher Laws, Alerts Public to Importance of Kosher Designations as Passover Approaches**

NEWARK – Shopping for the annual Passover Seder is becoming more convenient as the

number of supermarkets dedicated solely to kosher items increases and more grocery stores have large kosher sections. The New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs has continued to prioritize its inspections of establishments that sell kosher foods.

In 2016, the Division of Consumer Affairs, through its Office of Consumer Protection, inspected 504 establishments that sell kosher items, issued 10 notices of violation and collected \$14,450 in fines for such violations and failure to display proper signage and failure to keep proper records. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <http://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases17/pr20170406b.html>

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## NEW MEXICO

April 10, 2017

### **SCAM ALERT: AG Balderas Warns New Mexicans about ‘Can You Hear Me’ Scams**

Albuquerque, NM – Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas issued a Scam Alert regarding ‘Can you hear me’ phone scams. Scammers attempt to get victims to say the word “yes” during a call and later use a recording of the response to authorize unwanted charges on the victim's utility or credit card account. According to complaints the Office of the Attorney General and the FCC have received, the fraudulent callers impersonate representatives from organizations that provide a service and may be familiar to the person receiving the call, such as a mortgage lender or utility, to establish a legitimate reason for trying to reach the consumer. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas\\_Warns\\_New\\_Mexicans\\_about\\_%E2%80%99Can\\_You\\_Hear\\_Me%E2%80%99\\_Scams.pdf](http://www.nmag.gov/uploads/PressRelease/48737699ae174b30ac51a7eb286e661f/Balderas_Warns_New_Mexicans_about_%E2%80%99Can_You_Hear_Me%E2%80%99_Scams.pdf)

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## NEW YORK

April 20, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Issues Consumer Alert Warning Of Financial Scams Involving Gift Cards**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today issued a consumer alert about scammers utilizing gift cards to commit fraud against consumers, and in particular senior citizens, following an uptick of complaints received by the office. The Attorney General also announced that his office would partner with the Retail Council of New York State and AARP to adopt measures to protect customers from and educate them about common scams that utilize gift cards. In addition, the office is meeting with retailers, credit card companies and banks to institute additional measures to protect consumers from these scams. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-issues-consumer-alert-warning-financial-scams-involving-gift-cards>

April 19, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman's Health Care Helpline Recovers Nearly \$3 Million In Restitution And Savings For Consumers**

NEW YORK - Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today released a report detailing the work of his Health Care Bureau's Helpline, a free service offered by the Office of the Attorney General that has investigated and resolved nearly 3,000 consumer complaints during the past year – saving or returning approximately \$3 million in health care expenses to consumers. The service has also helped countless New Yorkers access medically necessary care or prescription medication previously denied to them.

"I'm proud of the free, vital service our Health Care Helpline provides to New York families. By intervening in claims to ensure timely, adequate, and cost-effective care, our Helpline advocates have saved New Yorkers millions of dollars – while helping ensure that New Yorkers have access to critical medical care they need," said Attorney General Schneiderman. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneidermans-health-care-helpline-recovers-nearly-3-million-restitution-and>

April 12, 2017

### **A.G. Schneiderman Announces New Legislation To Criminally Crack Down On Tenant Harassment**

NEW YORK—Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman unveiled new legislation today aimed at holding the city's most unscrupulous landlords criminally accountable for tenant harassment. Current state law demands prosecutors reach an inexplicably high bar in order to criminally charge landlords with harassment of rent-regulated tenants—which is why in the past twenty years, not a single landlord has ever been convicted of the crime of Harassment of a Rent Regulated Tenant. The AG's legislation would change that, by setting a more reasonable standard that removes the need to prove physical injury to a tenant, and opens the door to prosecutions arising out of more commonplace and insidious tactics, such as turning off heat and hot water, exposing young children to lead dust, and making rent-stabilized buildings deliberately uninhabitable for current tenants and their families. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/ag-schneiderman-announces-new-legislation-criminally-crack-down-tenant-harassment>

April 12, 2017

### **With Fear On The Rise In New York's Immigrant Communities, A.G. Schneiderman Releases Tenants' Rights Guidance For Immigrants Facing Landlord Harassment**

NEW YORK – Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman today released a new "Know Your Rights" guidance, providing immigrant tenants in New York State with legal guidance in the event that they face landlord harassment on the basis of immigration status.

With fear on the rise in immigrant communities, the Attorney General's office has received a

number of reports of tenant harassment; in particular, tenants and advocates have reported an increase of cases in which renters have been specifically targeted based on immigration status, including landlords threatening to call federal immigration officials and have the tenants deported in an attempt to illegally displace the tenants. ...

- **Original Press Release:** <https://ag.ny.gov/press-release/fear-rise-new-yorks-immigrant-communities-ag-schneiderman-releases-tenants-rights>

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## OKLAHOMA

April 21, 2017

### **Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter Hosts Annual Consumer Protection Day**

OKLAHOMA CITY – Today, Oklahoma Attorney General Mike Hunter hosted the tenth annual Consumer Protection Day at the Attorney General’s Office to raise awareness about the importance of consumer protection and potential scams.

Attorney General Hunter began the event speaking about the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Unit and the work being done within the office to protect Oklahomans.

“Our small, efficient team, handled 45 investigations last year and recovered over \$175,000 for individuals who were the victims of fraud,” Attorney General Hunter said. “The Consumer Protection Unit works around the clock to combat crime that could potentially hurt families across the state.” ...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.ok.gov/triton/modules/newsroom/newsroom\\_article.php?id=258&article\\_id=31495](https://www.ok.gov/triton/modules/newsroom/newsroom_article.php?id=258&article_id=31495)

April 18, 2017

### **Oklahoma Consumer Protection Week: AG's Office Working to Help Oklahomans Before and After Fraud**

By: Attorney General Mike Hunter

This year, thousands of Oklahomans will be the target of a fraud or scam.

Clever schemes using modern technology give scammers an unfair advantage to prey upon innocent victims.

Whether it’s a scam involving unfair business practices, home repair fraud or an individual who becomes the victim of an online phishing scam, it happens to our neighbors, friends and loved ones. Unfortunately, there is no way to completely prevent fraud from happening. ...

- **Original Press Release:** [https://www.ok.gov/triton/modules/newsroom/newsroom\\_article.php?id=258&article\\_id=31375](https://www.ok.gov/triton/modules/newsroom/newsroom_article.php?id=258&article_id=31375)

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## PENNSYLVANIA

April 18, 2017

### **Attorney General Josh Shapiro Testifies on Consumer Protection**

HARRISBURG — This morning, Attorney General Josh Shapiro testified before the House Consumer Affairs Committee on the Office of Attorney General’s work combatting scams and protecting consumers.

“I ran on strengthening the Office of Attorney General’s consumer protection work, and that’s exactly what I’m doing,” said Shapiro. “Already, we have created a new Office of Public Engagement to step up our work engaging the public, we’re exploring new ways to use technology to make our operation more efficient and working with others in law enforcement to crack down on scams and fraud.” ...

➤ **Original Press Release:**

[https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media\\_and\\_Resources/Press\\_Releases/Press\\_Release/?pid=3255](https://www.attorneygeneral.gov/Media_and_Resources/Press_Releases/Press_Release/?pid=3255)

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## WASHINGTON

April 13, 2017

### **Attorney General Ferguson’s Student Loan Transparency Act passes Legislature**

OLYMPIA — Attorney General Bob Ferguson’s bipartisan legislation to provide more transparency to students regarding their borrowing passed the Washington State Legislature today with a unanimous vote of the Senate.

Ferguson’s Student Loan Transparency Act, Senate Bill 5022, is sponsored by Sen. Barbara Bailey, R-Oak Harbor. Rep. Tina Orwall, D-Des Moines, sponsored its companion, House Bill 1057.

The legislation is part of the Attorney General’s larger focus on protecting student borrowers. These borrowers are often confounded by confusing or difficult to find information — but there is no shortage of scammers out to take advantage of them.

As part of a broad initiative, Ferguson proposed the agency-request legislation to mandate clear debt information for student borrowers in Washington. ...

➤ **Original Press Release:** <http://www.atg.wa.gov/news/news-releases/attorney-general-ferguson-s-student-loan-transparency-act-passes-legislature>