About the State Center Consumer Protection Report

*The Center for State Enforcement of Antitrust and Consumer Protection Laws* ("State Center") is pleased to present the latest edition of the State Center Consumer Protection Report ("Consumer Protection Report") Published in partnership with *StateAG.org*, the Consumer Protection Report is a monthly compilation of state attorney general press releases on local and national consumer protection efforts, including investigations, court cases, consumer alerts and advocacy initiatives. It makes no effort to prioritize, analyze or comment on the information presented in the press releases and their potential impact on consumers.

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

The Consumer Protection Report is produced through the State Center’s State AG Consumer Protection Initiative: a website featuring all current and previous editions of the Report, and a *database*, allowing visitors to conduct key-word and drop-down menu searches of all previous editions.

- For more information on the State AG Consumer Protection Initiative, please visit our website: www.statecenterinc.org/cpi-newsletter.
- 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
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Attorney General Becerra Charges Navient Corporation, Largest Student Loan Servicer, with Deceitful Practices and Debt-Collection Misconduct in Lawsuit

SACRAMENTO -- California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today announced that he will be filing a lawsuit this week against Navient Corporation (Navient) and its subsidiaries, Pioneer and General Revenue Corporation, for misconduct in the servicing and collection of federal student loans. Navient services approximately $300 billion in federal and private student loans held by 12 million borrowers. An estimated 1.5 million Navient borrowers live in California.

“Navient exploited every family’s dream of witnessing our children graduate from college. Our families are now facing a student loan debt crisis. America’s college students owe $1.5 trillion in outstanding student loans — more than the entire amount Americans owe in credit card debt. It’s $123 billion in federal student loan debt in California alone,” said Attorney General Becerra. “Navient’s loan servicing abuses have compounded the misery of parents and students who sacrificed to pay for college. Our students can’t afford to be cheated out...


Attorney General Becerra Files Charges Against El Dorado Hills Man, David William Reimers, for $2 Million Financial Fraud and Elder Abuse Scheme

SACRAMENTO – California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today announced the arrest and arraignment of David William Reimers, 52, of El Dorado Hills in El Dorado County, on 126 felony charges involving financial fraud against numerous elderly victims. The Attorney General’s complaint alleges that David Reimers solicited more than $2 million from elderly investors under false premises through his financial advising company, Reimers Financial. The defendant allegedly promised investors a guaranteed return, but instead of investing their money, he diverted the funds for personal gain. The defendant was arraigned today in El Dorado County Superior Court.

“Financial fraud against elderly Americans is far more common than we would like to believe. What David William Reimers is accused of doing demonstrates a level of immorality that destroys lives,” said Attorney General Becerra. “June is Elder Abuse Awareness Month, and at the California Department of Justice we will do our part to help...

June 14, 2018

**Attorney General Becerra Secures $67 Million in Debt Relief for Defrauded Former Corinthian Students in California**

SAN FRANCISCO – California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today announced a settlement with Balboa Student Loan Trust (Balboa) that will provide $67 million in critical debt forgiveness and other much-needed relief for the 34,971 Californians who took out private student loans to attend Corinthian Colleges (Corinthian).

“In the coming weeks, thousands of defrauded Corinthian students will receive a letter in the mail informing them that their loans have been fully forgiven. We hope this delivers some measure of closure and peace of mind,” said Attorney General Becerra. “While this settlement is an important step forward, there’s still a long way to go. It’s now time for U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to follow through on her end with the federal relief owed to defrauded Corinthian students on their federal student loans. At the California Department of Justice, we will continue to hold accountable those who would prey on America’s college...


June 07, 2018

**Attorney General Becerra Issues Cease and Desist Letters and Files Suit Over Dangerous Levels of Lead in Toddler Formula**

SACRAMENTO — California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today announced that he issued two cease and desist letters and has filed suit against two businesses that make and sell toddler formula, Nutraceutical Corp. and Graceleigh Inc., due to the discovery of dangerously elevated levels of lead in their toddler formulas. Testing conducted by the California Department of Justice on two products – Peaceful Planet Toddler Supreme and Sammy’s Milk Free-Range Goat Milk Toddler Formula – revealed that these formulas cause lead exposure between 13 and 15 times the maximum allowable dose level under California law without an adequate Proposition 65 warning. Both formulas exceed the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Provisional Total Tolerable Intake daily levels for children under six. In the lawsuit, Attorney General Becerra alleges that the two companies have violated California’s Unfair Competition Law, False Advertising Law, and Proposition 65, the state law that requires clear and reasonable...

COLORADO
June 05, 2018
Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman Announces Court of Appeals Victory Against Foreclosure Law Firm and Affiliated Title Companies
DENVER—Colorado Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman announced today that the Colorado Court of Appeals, in two published decisions, affirmed the 2016 trial verdict and judgments in excess of $1 million against foreclosure law firms Robert J. Hopp & Associates and The Hopp Law Firm, their affiliated title companies, and Robert J. Hopp personally.
The Court of Appeals agreed with the Denver District Court’s verdict that the law firms’ and affiliated title companies’ billing practices violated the Colorado Consumer Protection Act and the Colorado Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, which prohibit false, misleading, and deceptive practices. The appellate court concluded that the law firm was unlawfully billing its mortgage servicer clients for costs it did not actually incur when processing foreclosures for those clients. These unlawfully charged costs, often in excess of $1000, were assessed against homeowners in foreclosure.
“I am very pleased that the Court of Appeals upheld the judgement against the...


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
June 28, 2018
Attorney General Racine Sues Neglectful Landlord for Endangering Tenants and Housing Code Violations
Washington, D.C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today announced a lawsuit against Thomas K. Stephenson, the owner and operator of two rent-controlled apartment buildings in Northeast D.C., for persistently neglecting the properties and forcing tenants to live in conditions that threaten their health and safety. In the complaint, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) alleges that Stephenson collected rent from tenants but refused to maintain the apartments as required by law, leading to rodent and other vermin infestations, inconsistent heat and hot water, and dangerous fire code violations. OAG is seeking monetary and injunctive relief for harmed tenants, building repairs, and penalties.
“Mr. Stephenson neglected his apartment buildings and endangered his tenants’ health and safety,” said Attorney General Racine. “We’re suing to get relief for the harmed renters and to protect their legal right to live in habitable and safe conditions. While the majority of landlords follow the law,...

June 26, 2018
Attorney General Racine Announces Insurers Will Correct Errors In Flawed Mental Health Provider Directories
WASHINGTON, D. C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today announced an agreement with three insurance companies – Aetna, CareFirst BlueChoice, and UnitedHealthcare – to ensure that consumers have access to accurate information about mental health providers. The Office of the Attorney General’s (OAG) investigation of the insurers’ online and print directories of District psychiatrists revealed errors in doctors’ contact information and whether they were accepting new patients, making it difficult for consumers to access mental health services. In the agreement, the OAG requires the insurance companies to correct the provider directories, regularly audit that information, and pay the District $50,000 for investigation costs. “Insurers’ flawed health directories make it harder for consumers seeking treatment to get critical mental health services,” said Attorney General Racine. “District residents should not have to struggle to find the psychiatric help they urgently need, especially as suicides are on the rise in our city and…

➢ Original Press Release: https://oag.dc.gov/release/attorney-general-racine-announces-insurers-will

June 20, 2018
Attorney General Racine Sues Home Contractor For Illegal, Shoddy Construction Projects and Wage Theft
WASHINGTON, D. C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today announced a lawsuit against Xquisite Basements & Kitchens, Inc. and Newton Gaynor—a contractor and its owner-operator—for illegal or incomplete construction projects and cheating employees out of their pay. In the complaint, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) alleges the contractor duped seniors and other consumers into paying for lower-quality home repair services than promised; opened unauthorized credit lines for consumers; and made charges without their permission. The OAG’s complaint seeks injunctive and monetary relief for victims, as well as penalties. “The defendants preyed on seniors, made shoddy home repairs, charged consumers without their permission, and failed to pay its employees,” said Attorney General Racine. “We’re suing to bring relief to the victims and warn cheating contractors that we will take action to protect our residents and enforce District law.” …

June 26, 2018

Three Charged for Defrauding Seniors out of More Than $400,000

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi’s Office of Statewide Prosecution, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the Office of Financial Regulation today announced criminal charges against Matthew Braun, Michael Creamer and Rebecca Gonzales for participating in an organized scheme to defraud seniors in Broward, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties.

“These defendants are charged with targeting seniors and trying to steal their hard-earned retirement money with false promises of big profits. Anyone who tries to defraud Florida seniors deserves to be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law,” said Attorney General Pam Bondi. “I am grateful for the hard work of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Florida Office of Financial Regulation and my Office of Statewide Prosecution for investigating this case and protecting Florida’s seniors.”

The defendants allegedly preyed upon seniors in these counties, deceiving at least five individuals into investing more than $400,000 in a company called Blue...

➢ Original Press Release:
http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/CA94D111A7BB03D48525828B8004A8EA1

June 15, 2018

Three Arrested for Conning Seniors Out of More Than $150,000

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Pam Bondi’s Office of Statewide Prosecution and the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office today announced the arrest of two individuals, and the arrest warrant for a third person, for involvement in an organized fraud scheme targeting mostly older Hispanic citizens. The two defendants in custody, Jhon Figueroa, 52, of Orlando, and Siomara Jimenez, 48, of Kissimmee, are charged with 35 combined charges. The third defendant, Marino Jimenez Quintana, 48, of Kissimmee, has an active warrant for arrest on 13 separate charges.

“These charges are despicable. That anyone would prey on seniors to steal their hard-earned money is outrageous. My Office of Statewide Prosecution will prosecute these defendants to the fullest extent of the law and I want to thank Sheriff Chad Chronister and the great men and women at the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office for their work to fight fraud and protect seniors,” said Attorney General Pam Bondi. ...

➢ Original Press Release:
http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/29748372411D12EC852582B8004A8CB
IDAHO

June 01, 2018

Attorney General Lawrence Wasden Announces Settlement with Boise Clock Repair Business (BOISE) - Attorney General Lawrence Wasden has announced a consumer protection settlement with Boise clock repairman Steven J. Hernandez. The settlement requires Hernandez to refund consumers’ money, return their property, and change his business practices. The settlement results from the Attorney General’s investigation of Right on Time, Hernandez’s clock and watch repair business. In 2017, Hernandez abruptly closed his business while still in possession of consumers’ property. At one point, he allegedly possessed hundreds of clocks that were awaiting repair.

The deadline for affected consumers to file complaints is July 23, 2018. Hernandez has agreed to promptly return consumers’ property upon request. Consumers can call Hernandez at 208-860-8956 to arrange pick-up or delivery. If Hernandez is unable to return the property in the same condition in which he received it, he must pay the consumer the item’s current fair market value. ...


IOWA

June 01, 2018

Home-repair contractor must reimburse homeowners nearly $130,000, face new limits

A West Des Moines home-repair contractor accused of taking money for jobs he never completed must pay $129,855 and comply with several requirements to continue doing business as part of an agreement with the Iowa attorney general’s office.

Joshua Joseph Auten, owner of Over the Top Construction, is accused of violating the Iowa Consumer Fraud Act and other laws. According to a petition, the state’s allegations include that Auten made several misrepresentations to consumers on home-repair projects; failed to provide labor, materials or reimbursement of down payments; refused to respond to consumer complaints; failed to provide notices and follow procedures required by Iowa’s Door-to-Door Sales Act; failed to disclose that he had multiple civil judgments against him; and did business under false names. Auten worked under the name of Big Time Builders in Polk and Dallas counties, although that was not registered as a trade name in those counties. In...

KANSAS

June 13, 2018
AG Derek Schmidt: Oklahoma pavers permanently banned from doing business in Kansas, ordered to repay $40,000 to consumers
TOPEKA – (June 13, 2018) – A group of Oklahoma pavers has been permanently banned from doing business in Kansas and ordered to repay more than $40,000 to Kansas consumers after being found in violation of Kansas consumer protection laws, Attorney General Derek Schmidt said.

Defendants Harry Cooper, Harry Cooper Jr., and Robert Cooper, doing business as A.L. Paving Contractors, Paving Contractors, Asphalt Paving and JJ Paving, all of Spiro, Okla., were permanently enjoined from conducting consumer transactions and door-to-door sales in Kansas in a consent judgment approved Monday by Shawnee County District Court Judge Franklin R. Theis. The judgment also requires the defendants to repay $41,430 to Kansas consumers and reimburse the attorney general’s office for the costs of its investigation.

Schmidt had accused the defendants of violating the Kansas Consumer Protection Act (KCPA) by soliciting paving services door-to-door, failing to notify consumers of their three-day right to cancel the transaction...


June 04, 2018
AG Derek Schmidt: Unusual effort that returned $1.7 million to scam victims 'heartwarming'
TOPEKA - (June 4, 2018) - An unusual initiative by the attorney general’s office to find victims who wired money to scammers returned more than $1.7 million to almost 350 Kansans in about two months, Attorney General Derek Schmidt said today.

A 2017 legal settlement between federal and state authorities, including the Kansas attorney general, and Western Union required the company to pay refunds to people who used Western Union wire transfers to send money to scammers. But getting the word out to victims proved difficult because many victims had not filed complaints and therefore were unknown.

So in March, the attorney general obtained from Western Union a list of Kansans who had wired large amounts of money in recent years and mailed a personal notice to more than 25,000 people in the state. ...

KENTUCKY

June 14, 2018

Beshear Sues Walgreens for ‘Dual Role’ in State’s Opioid Epidemic

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 14, 2018) – Attorney General Andy Beshear today filed suit against Walgreens for its dual role as distributor and pharmacy in allegedly failing to legally monitor its own operations that shipped and dispensed large quantities of opioids through its more than 70 locations statewide.

Beshear said the company’s actions flooded Kentucky communities with dangerous prescription drugs, directly contributing to the state’s drug epidemic.

Since taking office, Beshear has been working to hold opioid manufacturers and distributors accountable and to find workable solutions to the drug epidemic.

The lawsuit, filed in Boone Circuit Court, alleges unfair, misleading and deceptive business practices by Walgreens for excessively distributing and dispensing opioids in Kentucky and for failing to legally report to state and federal authorities the suspiciously large orders it received for prescription opioids. ...


LOUISIANA

June 13, 2018

Illegal Immigrant Arrested for Installing Counterfeit Airbag in Salvaged Vehicle

BATON ROUGE, LA- Attorney General Jeff Landry today announced the arrest of an illegal immigrant for the illegal use of counterfeit trademark.

“When immigration laws are not enforced, a safe haven is created for illegal aliens to commit unlawful activities such as this one,” said General Landry. “Counterfeit products, especially ones as important as airbags, are detrimental to the safety of our citizens.”

“Criminal networks are working daily to fool the public with illegally imported counterfeit goods they use the profits from to fund other large-scale criminal activity,” said Jere T. Miles, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) New Orleans. “Selling counterfeit life-saving devices, such as airbags and airbag components, is an act of reckless disregard for public safety. HSI will continue to work with the Attorney General and other law enforcement partners to identity and prosecute these criminal enterprises and help save lives.”

Wilfredo Antonio Ramos-Mendoza, 25 year...

MAINE

June 07, 2018

THREE YEARS LATER: MAINE STUDENTS LEARN PLUMBING TRADE THANKS TO CONSUMER PROTECTION SETTLEMENT FUNDS

AUGUSTA--Four Maine high schools that were selected by the Attorney General’s Office to start plumbing training programs with funds received from a consumer protection settlement, trained nearly 100 students this 2017-2018 academic year.

“It’s not often enough that we see such tangible and immediate results from an investment. In just three years, this funding has opened doors for hundreds of Maine young people to learn new skills and potentially take an important step toward a rewarding and sustaining career,” said Janet T. Mills, Attorney General. “It’s also helping to fill a much needed skills gap among our trades professionals. During the past couple of years of these programs, we’ve seen example after example of local plumbers stepping up and going above and beyond to mentor and train these young people. That’s a win-win for our students, our employers, and our communities.” …


MASSACHUSETTS

June 26, 2018

Life Insurance Company to Refund Massachusetts Consumers Targeted by Unlicensed Agent

Boston — Transamerica Premier Life Insurance Company will refund premiums to consumers and make a $19,647 payment to the Commonwealth to resolve allegations that it failed to supervise an agent who sold life insurance policies in Massachusetts without a license, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today.

The agent, Wenifredo Aleman, allegedly sold universal life insurance policies to Filipino immigrants, some of whom had limited proficiency with English, by making material misrepresentations to induce them to purchase the policies.

“When consumers put their trust in insurance companies, they deserve to be treated fairly and respectfully,” said AG Healey. “We found this agent used deceptive practices to manipulate immigrants into purchasing policies they didn’t fully understand. I am pleased today’s settlement will put an end to these practices and allow affected consumers to receive refunds.”

The Attorney General’s Office began investigating Transamerica Premier Life after receiving a complaint from a Massachusetts customer about her…

June 22, 2018

**AG Healey Secures Additional Debt Relief for Massachusetts Corinthian Students**

Boston — Campus Student Funding, a subsidiary of Oregon-based Aequitas Capital Management Inc., has agreed to discharge $121,000 in private loans and return recent payments from Massachusetts students of Corinthian Colleges Inc., which operated two for-profit schools in Massachusetts under the name Everest Institute, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today.

Under the terms of the settlement, filed in Suffolk Superior Court, Campus Student Funding has also agreed to repair negative credit reporting associated with these loans.

“Corinthian was a predatory for-profit school that broke Massachusetts law by aggressively recruiting students and failing to deliver the education and career opportunities it promised,” AG Healey said. “Today’s settlement will help Massachusetts students get out from under the crushing debt Corinthian caused.”

In 2014, the AG’s Office filed a lawsuit alleging that Corinthian violated the state Consumer Protection Act by misrepresenting the likelihood of job placement to Massachusetts consumers in order to induce enrollment. The lawsuit...


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June 12, 2018

**AG Healey Takes Action Against Fifth Student Loan “Debt Relief” Company**

Boston — United Advisors Group LLC has agreed to pay $44,593 and cease doing business in Massachusetts to resolve allegations that it charged unlawful upfront fees and misled customers about its services, Attorney General Maura Healey announced today.

“Student loan ‘debt relief’ companies typically target and exploit individuals struggling to repay their loans,” AG Healey said. “My office is committed to preventing these fly-by-night companies from misleading Massachusetts consumers and taking advantage of them by charging unnecessary and unlawful fees.”

The AG’s Office filed the assurance of discontinuance in Suffolk Superior Court alleging United Advisors Group, a California-based company, charged upfront fees to student loan borrowers in violation of state laws governing credit services organizations that do business in Massachusetts. In addition, the AG’s Office alleges the company misrepresented its services to its customers.

Under the settlement, United Advisors Group will provide full refunds to all of its Massachusetts customers, and is prohibited...

June 12, 2018

**AG Healey Sues Purdue Pharma, Its Board Members and Executives for Illegally Marketing Opioids and Profiting From Opioid Epidemic**

Boston — Attorney General Maura Healey today sued Purdue Pharma L.P. and Purdue Pharma Inc. (Purdue) for misleading prescribers and consumers about the addiction and health risks of their opioids, including OxyContin, to get more people to take these drugs, at higher and more dangerous doses, and for longer periods of time to increase the companies’ profits. The complaint alleges that Purdue contributed to the opioid epidemic, including the opioid-related deaths of more than 670 Massachusetts residents prescribed Purdue opioids since 2009 and thousands more who struggled with cycles of overdose and addiction. The AG’s complaint also names 16 current and former directors and executives of the privately held Purdue, alleging that as leadership, these individuals directed Purdue’s deception.

“The opioid epidemic is killing five people every day in Massachusetts,” said AG Healey. “Purdue Pharma and its executives built a multi-billion-dollar business based on deception and addiction. The more drugs they sold,...


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**MICHIGAN**

June 28, 2018

**Schuette Sues AmeriGas for Violating the Michigan Consumer Protection Act**

LANSING – For the second time in four years, Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette has sued propane distributor AmeriGas, one of the largest retail suppliers of residential propane in Michigan, for violating the Michigan Consumer Protection Act. Following an extensive investigation, the lawsuit alleges numerous problems with the company’s operations impacting consumers throughout the State of Michigan. The suit seeks civil penalties as well as reimbursement for Michigan consumers.

“I take enforcement of the Michigan Consumer Protection Act seriously, especially when a company may have repeatedly violated the act,” said Schuette. “Michigan Consumers deserve companies that follow the law, and I will hold them accountable.”

Some of the allegations mentioned in the lawsuit are:

AmeriGas allegedly charged some of its customers grossly excessive per-gallon prices on propane during the winter of 2015-16. The charges, sometimes more than $3.00 per gallon, were allegedly used to offset discounts given to entice new customers. Weekly...

➤ **Original Press Release:** https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-471817--,00.html
June 12, 2018

Schuette: Canadian Owner and Michigan- Based Energy Company Charged with 21 Felonies in $2 Million Generator Investment Scam

LANSING - Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today charged John Von Stach and VSP North America each with one count of Conducting a Criminal Enterprise, a 20-year felony, and 20 counts of obtaining money by false pretenses. The charges stem from allegations that Von Stach, through his company, scammed multiple investors out of millions of dollars in a solar powered generator scam. "This individual is alleged through the guise of his company to have taken advantage of Michigan residents and their hard-earned money for personal gain," said Schuette. "I want to thank my Corporate Oversight Division for their dedication to uncovering fraud and protecting Michigan residents."

The charges against Von Stach and VSP are as follows...

➤ Original Press Release: https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-470803--,00.html

June 11, 2018

Schuette Charges Flint’s Swanson Funeral Home Owner with 10 Felonies for Failing to Properly Fulfill Funeral Contracts

LANSING – Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today charged O’Neil Swanson III, 57, of West Bloomfield, with 10 felony counts of Funeral Contracts – Conversion. Swanson allegedly offered prepaid funeral contracts that he was not legally licensed to offer. It is also alleged that Swanson failed to properly deposit prepaid funds and used them for personal expenses. Swanson is the former operator of Swanson Funeral Home on Martin Luther King Ave in Flint. “This individual has taken advantage of his customers, breaking not only their trust but the law,” said Schuette. “I want to thank LARA for their involvement in this case and note that this should serve as a warning to other individuals looking to make a quick buck by taking advantage of others.”

Swanson was charged with 10 counts of Funeral Contracts – conversion, a five-year felony, on Friday, June 8, 2018. He was arraigned in 67th District Court before...

➤ Original Press Release: https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-470706--,00.html
**NEBRASKA**

June 26, 2018

AGO Files Consent Judgment and Issues Report at Conclusion of Goodwill Omaha Investigation

Lincoln—Today, Attorney General Peterson was joined by AAG Meghan Stoppel who heads the Consumer Protection Division in the Attorney General’s Office to announce the issuance of a report and the filing of a Consent Judgment in Douglas County District Court against Goodwill Industries, Inc. and Goodwill Specialty Services, Inc. (collectively Goodwill Omaha). The Consent Judgment contains a number of remedial actions which Goodwill Omaha will be expected to take to address concerns cited by the Nebraska Attorney General’s Office (AGO) and to ensure Goodwill Omaha’s future compliance with the law. The AGO began its investigation of Goodwill Omaha in late 2016, following a series of articles about the organization that ran in a statewide newspaper. Those articles raised a number of questions about whether Goodwill Omaha was complying with the Nebraska Nonprofit Corporation Act and various consumer protection laws. As one of the largest and best-known nonprofits in Nebraska, the questions...


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**NEVADA**

June 22, 2018

Attorney General Laxalt and Federal Trade Commission Obtain Federal Judgment Against Parties Responsible for Revenge Pornography Website

Carson City, NV – Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt announced that the State of Nevada, along with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), obtained a judgment against the parties responsible for the revenge pornography website, MyEx.com, for violation of federal and state law. The order results from the website’s non-consensual posting of intimate images of individuals, along with their personal information. As a result of the order, MyEx.com is permanently barred from operating a website or online service that disseminates intimate images of individuals without their verifiable, affirmative, express consent in writing. The court also ordered the defendants to destroy the intimate images in their possession, and to pay $2,022,930 in monetary relief to the FTC. After the Office of the Nevada Attorney General and the FTC filed for an injunction in January of this year, MyEx.com was successfully taken offline. This newly acquired federal order now ensures that the website...

June 05, 2018

**Attorney General Laxalt Announces Guilty Plea in Telemarketing Scam Targeting the Elderly**

Las Vegas, NV – Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt announced that Emmanuel D. Ford, 39, pleaded guilty for his role in a telemarketing scam targeting the elderly. Ford pleaded guilty to one count of multiple transactions involving fraud or deceit and one count of theft, both category “B” felonies. The frauds were committed between April 2013 and March 2014.

Ford operated a telemarketing business in Las Vegas, NV under the company names of North Lake Consulting, Inc., Bakersfield Marketing and Management, Inc., Downline Marketing and Training, Inc., and Dream Marketing and SEO, Inc. Ford, either personally or by the acts of his co-conspirators, solicited individuals to invest in a web-based business they represented as profitable. He made these representations knowing that the individuals solicited would not in fact profit from their investments. As a result, Ford will be ordered to pay restitution in the amount of $136,628.41 to the named...


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**NEW JERSEY**

June 28, 2018

**Landlord Who Refused State Sandy Assistance Voucher Must Pay Single Mother $28,000 to Resolve Housing Discrimination Claim**

TRENTON – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal and the Division on Civil Rights announced today that a New Jersey landlord must pay a single mother $28,000 to resolve allegations he unlawfully evicted the woman after she sought to pay her rent with a State-issued housing assistance voucher for families displaced by Superstorm Sandy.

Under terms of a settlement reached between the parties – Ocean County rental property owner Raymond McCann and former tenant Joy Fender – McCann also must adopt a specific non-discrimination policy that makes clear he will accept rental payment in the form of government-issued housing assistance vouchers.

McCann evicted Fender and her three children from the house they were renting from him in Seaside Heights in November 2015. Fender claimed the eviction came one month after she showed McCann her State-issued housing assistance voucher -- issued by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs -- and asked him to...

June 15, 2018

**New Jersey Bureau of Securities Revokes Registrations of Investment Advisory Firm and Its Owner for Defrauding Elderly New Jersey Investors**

NEWARK – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal and the Division of Consumer Affairs announced that the Bureau of Securities (“the Bureau”) today revoked the registrations of a Morris County investment advisory firm and its owner, and assessed them $500,000 in civil penalties for fraudulently selling at least $6.1 million in unregistered securities to elderly and retired New Jersey investors.

Richard Belott, the managing member and investment adviser representative of Financial Planning Advisors, LLC (“FPA”), sold unregistered securities to at least eight investors, including elderly and retired clients of FPA, then used at least $1.55 million of investors’ funds on personal expenses, including his daughter’s college tuition, extravagant trips for himself and his wife, and mortgage payments on the couple’s beach house.

The Bureau’s action comes on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, a day when individuals and organizations from around the globe participate in activities and events to raise awareness about the physical,...

› [Original Press Release](https://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases18/pr20180615a.html)

June 12, 2018

**AG Grewal Sends “Cease and Desist” Letters Warning “Ghost Gun” Makers to Stop Advertising, Selling in New Jersey**

TRENTON – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal today sent “cease and desist” letters to “ghost gun” manufacturers throughout the United States, ordering them to stop advertising and selling partially-built firearms – including assault weapons – in New Jersey.

Each of these companies sell nearly-complete firearms, often with the parts needed to finish them, and even train their buyers on how to complete these weapons. These companies call their products “ghost guns” because these firearms have never been registered and do not have serial numbers. In fact, these manufacturers have even been explicitly advertising “unregistered and unserialized builds” of assault rifles to New Jersey consumers via their websites.

“These weapons are illegal in our state. Your actions violate the laws of New Jersey and, if you do not stop these activities within 15 days, I will bring legal action against your company,” Attorney General Grewal warns in the letter. ...

› [Original Press Release](https://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases18/pr20180612a.html)
June 07, 2018

**Man Sentenced to 10 Years in State Prison for Using His Securities Trading Company to Steal $400,000 from Investors**

TRENTON – Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal announced that an Ocean County man was sentenced to prison today for stealing over $400,000 from investors by depositing their funds into a securities trading company he formed, but then using the funds for his own expenses and personal day trading.

Jeffrey D. Griffin, Jr., 43, of Toms River, N.J., was sentenced today to 10 years in state prison by Superior Court Judge Joseph Portelli in Passaic County. He also was ordered to pay full restitution. Griffin was convicted at trial on May 8 by a Passaic County jury of all counts in a five-count indictment charging him with theft by deception, misapplication of entrusted property, two counts of violation of New Jersey’s Uniform Securities Act, and money laundering, all in the second degree.


[Original Press Release](https://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases18/pr20180607c.html)

June 06, 2018

**Third-Party Energy Supplier IDT Energy, Inc. Enters into $1.36 Million Settlement with the State to Resolve Allegations It Preyed on Consumers During the Harsh Winter of 2014**

NEWARK – Third-party energy supplier IDT Energy, Inc. (“IDT Energy”) has agreed to pay $1.36 million, including $1.2 million in restitution to consumers, and has agreed to significantly revise its business practices in order to resolve the State’s allegations that it engaged in unfair and deceptive business practices that saddled consumers with sky-high energy bills during the harsh winter of 2014.

The agreement between the Division of Consumer Affairs and the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (collectively “the State”) and IDT Energy resolves the State’s allegations that during an unusually cold period that caused energy prices to spike in early 2014, IDT Energy engaged in aggressive and deceptive marketing and sales tactics; switched consumers’ energy suppliers without their authorization; misled consumers with promises of lower energy rates; failed to provide consumers with energy rates that were consistent with the pricing mechanisms in the IDT Energy contracts; and utilized contracts that included...

[Original Press Release](https://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases18/pr20180606a.html)
NEW MEXICO
June 13, 2018
AG Balderas Secures Key Victory in Massive Opioid Litigation; Lawsuit Will be Heard in New Mexico instead of a Federal Court of a $200 Billion Dollar Corporation’s Choosing
Albuquerque, NM – This morning, Attorney General Hector Balderas announced a key victory in New Mexico’s lawsuit against major opioid manufacturers and distributors—the case will be tried in New Mexico state court. Late Tuesday, a federal judge ruled that Attorney General Balderas’ lawsuit must be returned to the state court where it was originally filed. On April 25 of this year, McKesson Corporation, a pharmaceutical distributor that reported 2017 revenues of nearly $200 billion, removed New Mexico’s case to federal court in an attempt to sweep New Mexico into a growing federal multi-district litigation currently overseen by a federal judge in Ohio. Tuesday’s ruling effectively terminates that attempt, returning New Mexico’s case to state district court and all but ensuring that the case will be tried before a New Mexico state judge and a New Mexico jury who understand our unique state, population and way of life.
"I’m pleased the federal...


NEW YORK
June 28, 2018
A.G. Underwood Announces Conviction And Sentencing Of Tech Firm And Former Chief Executive Officer In Massive Securities Fraud Scheme
NEW YORK – Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced the conviction and sentencing of Freevi Corp., d/b/a Sungame Corp. (“Sungame”), and former Sungame Chief Executive Officer Neil Chandran, 47, of Nevada. On April 27, 2018, both Sungame and Chandran pleaded guilty to Grand Larceny and Securities Fraud in connection with a scheme to steal millions from unwitting investors by soliciting investments in computer tablets that were supposedly able to display content in 3D (“Tablets”). Today, Sungame and Chandran were sentenced to pay $768,000 in restitution and to execute over $2,100,000 in judgments in favor of their New York State victims, and were permanently banned from engaging in the distribution, sale, or purchase of any securities or commodities within or from New York State. During the relevant time period, Sungame was a publicly-traded Las Vegas, Nevada-based technology firm trading under symbol “SGMZ.” ...

June 27, 2018

A.G. Underwood Announces Joint Lawsuit With Federal Trade Commission To Shut Down Phantom Debt Collection Scheme

BUFFALO – Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced a joint lawsuit with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to stop the collection and distribution of “phantom debts” that consumers do not actually owe. The complaint alleges that Hylan Asset Management, LLC and its owner Andrew Shaevel, and Worldwide Processing Group, LLC and its owner Frank Ungaro Jr. violated New York State’s fair debt collection statute and laws prohibiting deceptive acts and practices, as well as the FTC Act. It also alleges that certain defendants violated the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. The lawsuit seeks to permanently stop this illegal conduct and to obtain money to provide refunds to consumers.

“It’s unconscionable to collect on fake debts that consumers don’t actually owe in order to make a quick buck,” said Attorney General Underwood. “We’ll continue to work with our partners in government to hold these phantom debt collectors accountable.”

According to the complaint,...


June 22, 2018

A.G. Underwood Announces Resentencing Of Previously-Convicted Investment Fraudster For Willfully Failing To Pay Restitution To Victims Of The Largest Theft In Greene County History

GREENE COUNTY — Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced the resentencing of Franklin S. Marone, 55, of Queens, NY in Greene County Court for willfully failing to pay restitution to victims of his $5.4 million fraud scheme, in violation of the terms of his prior sentence. Additionally, Marone pleaded guilty to perjury and false filing charges for submitting fraudulent financial disclosures concealing his assets from the court in order to avoid paying restitution to the victims. Between 1998 and 2004, Marone, a former stockbroker, stole over $5.4 million from his fellow members of the ski patrol at a Catskills mountain resort through an elaborate investment fraud scheme. After being convicted of Grand Larceny in the First Degree and Scheme to Defraud, in an effort to conceal his assets and income and to avoid paying restitution, Marone filed two false financial affidavits with the court. Marone will be sentenced to...


June 21, 2018

A.G. Underwood Announces Victory In Ongoing Lawsuit Against Charter-Spectrum

NEW YORK – New York Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood released the following...
statement, upon a decision by the Appellate Division, First Department rejecting Charter-Spectrum’s motion to dismiss the Attorney General’s lawsuit:
“This decision affirms the basic principle that our office – and state attorneys general nationwide – can continue to protect consumers from fraud by their internet service providers. We look forward to moving our case forward and holding Charter and its predecessor Time Warner Cable accountable for promising New York consumers internet speeds they could not deliver.”

Last year, the New York Attorney General sued Charter-Spectrum. Earlier this year, the New York Supreme Court fully dismissed Charter-Spectrum’s motion to dismiss.


June 15, 2018

A.G. Underwood Announces Settlement With Queens Auto Dealer Over Deceptive Practices

QUEENS – Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced a settlement resolving an investigation of Nemet Hyundai, Nemet Kia, Nemet Nissan, and Nemet Motors, a family of auto dealers located in Queens. The Office of the Attorney General opened an investigation of the dealerships after receiving dozens of complaints from consumers about unwanted charges, fraudulent sales tactics, and other deceptive maneuvers that misled New Yorkers about the products for which they were paying.

In the settlement, the Attorney General obtained restitution for New Yorkers harmed by the dealerships' fraudulent business practices, a requirement that the dealerships stop any illegal and deceptive activity, and civil penalties for the alleged deceptive acts. Under the terms of the settlement, affected New Yorkers have until July 30th, 2018 to file a complaint in order to be eligible for a refund. Consumers can file through the Attorney General’s office, either online or by calling 1-800-771-7755.

“We have...


June 14, 2018

Attorney General Underwood Announces Lawsuit Against Donald J. Trump Foundation And Its Board Of Directors For Extensive And Persistent Violations Of State And Federal Law

NEW YORK - Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced a lawsuit against the Donald J. Trump Foundation, and its directors, Donald J. Trump (“Mr. Trump”), Donald J. Trump, Jr., Ivanka Trump, and Eric Trump. The petition filed today alleges a pattern of persistent illegal conduct, occurring over more than a decade, that includes extensive unlawful political coordination with the Trump presidential campaign, repeated and willful self-dealing
transactions to benefit Mr. Trump’s personal and business interests, and violations of basic legal obligations for non-profit foundations. The Attorney General initiated a special proceeding to dissolve the Trump Foundation under court supervision and obtain restitution of $2.8 million and additional penalties. The AG’s lawsuit also seeks a ban from future service as a director of a New York not-for-profit of 10 years for Mr. Trump and one year for each of the Foundation’s other board members, Donald Trump Jr., Ivanka Trump, and...


June 12, 2018
A.G. Underwood Announces Sentencing Of Fake Grant Writer Who Stole More Than $200,000 From Buffalo Churches, Nonprofits, And Local Businesses
BUFFALO — Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced the sentencing of Christina Sanford Gordon, who stole more than $200,000 from Buffalo churches, community organizations, and local businesses by misrepresenting herself as a grant writing expert and successful fundraiser. As detailed in criminal charges and a civil suit brought by the Attorney General’s office in March 2018, Gordon – through a sophisticated scheme – convinced over 30 organizations that she had applied for and obtained state-awarded grants. However, an investigation conducted by the Attorney General’s office found that Gordon never actually applied for or obtained any grants. Instead, she spent the money the community groups paid her for supposed grant writing services on luxurious personal expenses, including beauty treatments, cruises, jewelry, and apparel. Today, Gordon was sentenced to 7 ½ to 15 years in prison by Erie County Court Judge Sheila DiTullio. ...


June 11, 2018
A.G. Underwood Announces Guilty Plea Of Former Guilderland Town Judge Richard Sherwood For Stealing Over $11 Million In Family Trusts He Oversaw
ALBANY — New York Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced the guilty plea of lawyer and former Town of Guilderland Judge Richard Sherwood for a scheme in which he and an alleged co-conspirator plundered over $11 million from family trusts they were responsible for overseeing.
Sherwood pleaded guilty before Albany County Court Judge Peter A. Lynch to Grand Larceny in the Second Degree (a Class C felony). As a result of these charges, he previously resigned as Guilderland Town Judge. Sherwood faces up to three to ten years in prison.
“New Yorkers should be able to trust that their financial advisors will make sound decisions – not scheme to line their own pockets,” said Attorney General Underwood. “We will continue to
hold accountable those that try to game the system and violate the public trust.”
As detailed in the complaint, since at least 2006, Sherwood and alleged co-conspirator Thomas Lagan provided...


June 04, 2018

**A.G. Barbara Underwood Statement On Facebook Investigation**

“The news that Facebook struck ‘data-sharing’ partnerships with other corporations is yet another reminder of the many questions that remain unanswered – questions to which New Yorkers deserve clear answers. Consumers have the right to know how their personal information is being used; and the companies we trust with our information have a critical responsibility to protect it. Our investigation into the reported misuse of Facebook user data by Cambridge Analytica and others remains ongoing – including into these ‘data-sharing’ partnerships. We’re committed to getting to the bottom of what happened.”


June 01, 2018

**A.G. Underwood Announces Settlement With Ageless Men’s Health For Misleading Patients In Diagnosing And Treating Low Testosterone**

NEW YORK — Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced an agreement with Ageless Men’s Health, P.C. (“Ageless”), requiring Ageless to make complete and accurate disclosures to its patients and prospective patients concerning the diagnosis of low testosterone and the risks associated with testosterone replacement therapy (“TRT”). TRT is an increasingly common treatment for men with low levels of testosterone, sometimes called hypogonadism or “Low T.”

Ageless and its affiliates provide TRT to men at 36 clinics across the United States, including three in New York City. Ageless failed to inform patients that in diagnosing low testosterone and addressing potential side effects of treatment, it was not following evidence-based practices recommended by leading medical organizations. Additionally, Ageless prominently featured a deceptive “Low T quiz” on its website that misled patients regarding the diagnosis of low testosterone.

“Every New Yorker is entitled to full and honest disclosures about the limitations and risks of...

OHIO
June 27, 2018
Dayton-Area Heating and Air-Conditioning Supplier Accused of Failing to Deliver Services
(DAYTON, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a consumer protection lawsuit against a Dayton heating and air-conditioning provider accused of repeatedly failing to deliver promised services to consumers in southwest Ohio.
The lawsuit accuses Daniel W. Wells of taking money for services he never provided or performing shoddy work while operating under the names Kelly Heating & Air Conditioning, Reagan Same Day Heating & Cooling, and Kelly’s Plumbing & Heating.
“We’re taking this action to protect consumers,” Attorney General DeWine said. “We think people should know about the repeated problems customers have had with this operator.”
In 2017, the Ohio Attorney General’s Office obtained a judgment against Wells in a similar consumer protection case, but an investigation by the office found that the problems continued.
The new lawsuit concerns 18 complaints filed against Wells’ companies in the past two years. In their complaints, consumers generally said they paid hundreds of dollars...


OKLAHOMA
June 28, 2018
Attorney General Hunter Comments on Administrative Law Judge Ruling in Favor of Returning Tax Savings to PSO Customers
OKLAHOMA CITY – Attorney General Mike Hunter today released the following statement on Administrative Law Judge Mary Candler’s recommendation that Public Service Company of Oklahoma (PSO) pass the savings from the federal income tax cut to its customers.
The recommendation was released in the case the Attorney General’s Office filed in December, requesting the Oklahoma Corporation Commission ensure tax savings are passed on to PSO’s customers.
“We appreciate Judge Candler recommending PSO return the windfall it received from the federal tax cuts to its customers,” Attorney General Hunter said. “The tax cut provides an opportunity for real savings for customers, especially during the summer months when energy usage rises along with the temperature. We hope the members of the Oklahoma Corporation Commission complete their review as quickly as possible to benefit PSO customers.”
The Attorney General’s staff estimates the recommendation, if approved, would return approximately $23.85 to an average residential customer of PSO,...

CBS This Morning | CBS Correspondent Tony Dokoupil sits down with Attorney General Mike Hunter to discuss the state's opioid lawsuit

Purdue Pharma laid off its entire sales team this week. Now only on "CBS This Morning," a former Purdue sales representative reveals the drugmaker downplayed the dangers of opioids, even after pleading guilty to a felony charge of "misbranding." Purdue's 2007 settlement with the Justice Department included more than $630 million in fines.

But 24 states and more than 400 cities and counties are suing Purdue and its competitors, accusing them of fueling an opioid drug crisis that's killed more than 200,000 people. Purdue makes OxyContin, perhaps the best known opioid painkiller in America. In 2007, it admitted to falsely selling the drug as less addictive than rivals. But a former Purdue salesperson tells us the deceptive sales didn't end there.

"It was always in the back of my mind that maybe the company had not told us the whole truth when they hired us, when we interviewed, when we went through training,"...


June 19, 2018

Attorney General Hunter Applauds Corporation Commission’s Vote to Approve OG&E Rate Reduction

OKLAHOMA CITY - Attorney General Mike Hunter today applauded the three members of the Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC) after they voted unanimously to approve the historic $64 million rate reduction for OG&E customers that was announced last week. The decision today will give OG&E’s standard residential customers a one-time $18.71 refund on their July bills from tax cuts the company received from the federal tax reduction approved by Congress in December. The decision to return the savings comes after Attorney General Hunter filed motions with the OCC, requesting companies return the savings from the tax cut to customers in December. Commissioners ultimately requested the companies track the savings and return the money at a later date. Standard residential customers will also receive an ongoing monthly rate reduction of approximately $4.44, on average.

“I commend the unanimous decision by the corporation commissioners today, and for acting expeditiously to approve this historic rate reduction for OG&E...”


June 21, 2018
June 14, 2018

Attorney General Hunter Condemns Purdue Pharma for Attempting to Move State’s Opioid Case to Federal Court

OKLAHOMA CITY – Attorney General Mike Hunter today condemned Purdue Pharma for filing a notice of removal in the state’s lawsuit against the nation’s leading opioid manufacturers. Through the filing, Purdue is attempting to transfer the state’s lawsuit to a sprawling multidistrict litigation in an Ohio federal court that includes hundreds of other opioid-related cases.

Yesterday’s filing comes after Purdue agreed in a July 2017 court filing that the state’s claims were properly before the state court in Cleveland County and the company would not try to move the case to federal court.

Purdue has now breached that agreement, claiming the state’s lawsuit involves federal issues and Cleveland County District Court Judge Thad Balkman has no jurisdiction over the case. Judge Balkman has already ruled the state’s case did not include federal issues.

In response to Purdue’s filing, the state’s attorneys plan to file a motion to remand, to keep the case moving forward...


June 13, 2018

Attorney General Hunter Announces Historic Rate Reduction for OG&E Customers

OKLAHOMA CITY – Attorney General Mike Hunter today announced parties involved in the OG&E rate case have reached a historic $64 million rate reduction settlement agreement, resulting in lower utility bills for OG&E customers beginning in July.

Customers will also receive a one-time refund as a result of the $18.5 million federal corporate income tax cut, after the attorney general called on companies to pass on the savings to customers in January.

With the rate case settlement agreement and the savings from the federal income tax cut, OG&E’s standard residential customers will see an average approximate reduction of $18.71 on their July bills. Each subsequent month, the average savings for a standard residential customer will be approximately $4.44.

Non-residential customers, such as businesses and government agencies, will see a total savings of approximately $32 million.

Attorney General Hunter said with summer months being the costliest for utility customers, the reduction couldn’t have come at...

June 11, 2018

Attorney General Hunter’s Office Responds to Open Records Request on Opioid Lawsuit
OKLAHOMA CITY - Attorney General Mike Hunter’s Office has responded to an official open records request regarding how the attorneys were selected in the state’s lawsuit against the nation’s leading opioid manufacturers.

Gentner Drummond, requested specific documents regarding requests for proposals, which law firms were solicited, how the law firms were chosen and the contracts with the firm. In the response letter, General Counsel to the Attorney General Abby Dillsaver explained, under Oklahoma law, contracts for professional services, including attorneys, are exempt from competitive bidding. The contract and associated documents were provided in response to the request. …


June 06, 2018

Attorney General Hunter Announces Settlement with Volkswagen over Diesel Scandal
OKLAHOMA CITY – Attorney General Mike Hunter today announced an $8.5 million settlement has been reached with Volkswagen (VW) and related auto manufacturers from the state’s lawsuit against the automakers for false and deceptive advertising.

The lawsuit was filed after an investigation found the company deliberately installed illegal software in diesel vehicles to cheat laboratory emissions tests, allowing the vehicles to meet standards. During real-world driving conditions, the emissions systems deactivated, emitting as much as 40 times the amount of nitrogen oxide allowed in the United States.

VW aggressively marketed these vehicles as environmentally friendly, with fuel efficiency, torque and power capabilities as added advantages.

Attorney General Hunter said the state’s lawsuit was necessary to uphold the state’s consumer protection laws.

“VW purposefully misled consumers in one of the most egregious cases of false advertising the automobile industry has ever seen,” Attorney General Hunter said. “The company’s fraudulent marketing practices deceived thousands of…

Attorney General Josh Shapiro Announces Settlement With Tobacco Companies Over Disputed Payments Back to 2004

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced that his office has reached a settlement on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with various tobacco companies, resolving 20 years of disputes and future disputes relating to the 1998 Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement.

Under the settlement, Pennsylvania will receive nearly $357 million in tobacco settlement money during fiscal year 2018 – 2019 on top of the $350 million it receives annually from tobacco companies. In addition to these initial amounts, Pennsylvania will receive $279 million more over the following 12 years, which will go to the Commonwealth’s general fund.

“This settlement ends this longstanding litigation and its associated risk to the Commonwealth while providing certainty going forward,” Attorney General Josh Shapiro said. “Instead of being argued over for years, this money will now timely and directly benefit the residents of our Commonwealth.”

The settlement resolves disputes from 2004-2015 and existing and anticipated disputes for...

June 20, 2018
Dauphin County Payroll Firm Owner Sentenced to Jail for Stealing Nearly $6 Million from Small Businesses

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced that a former Dauphin County business owner has pleaded guilty and was sentenced to jail for stealing nearly $6 million from 266 clients who entrusted their payroll funds and administration to his company.

William Sullivan, 45, formerly of S. Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, pleaded guilty to theft by failure to make required disposition of funds, a first-degree felony, for stealing $5,737,948 from clients between 2006 and 2011. As part of his guilty plea, Sullivan was ordered to pay approximately $4 million in restitution to victims. Sullivan’s company, Net Pay Solutions, filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy in 2011.

Sullivan was sentenced Tuesday in Dauphin County Court by Judge William Tully to 15 to 30 months in state prison, followed by 54 months of probation. The sentence will run concurrent to a federal sentence Sullivan received earlier this month for similar crimes. Sullivan’s company had clients across...

June 15, 2018

AG Shapiro: Montgomery County Insurance Agency Head Pleads Guilty to $97K Insurance Fraud, Ordered to Fully Pay Back His Victims

HARRISBURG, PA — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced the owner of a Montgomery County insurance agency who defrauded clients out of $97,000 in inflated premiums has pleaded guilty to insurance fraud and made full restitution to the clients. Thomas Harbaugh, 60, of York Road, Hatboro, pleaded guilty today in Montgomery County Court to insurance fraud and failure to make required disposition of funds, both felonies. As president and owner of Miller & Cornell, Harbaugh altered insurance policies and inflated premiums on policies sold to HighPoint Solutions and Randy Bardol Wallcovering – to make it look like the clients had more coverage than Harbaugh actually secured for them. Harbaugh committed the fraud without the knowledge of either client, and stole $97,471 from them over five years. “This defendant – who served on Hatboro Borough Council and the boards of the Hatboro Chamber of Commerce and a local bank – betrayed his clients, sacrificed...


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PUERTO RICO

June 29, 2018

Government of Puerto Rico demands Equifax

(San Juan) - The Secretary of the Department of Justice, Wanda Vázquez Garced, and the Secretary of Consumer Affairs, Michael Pierluisi, reported that the Government of Puerto Rico filed a lawsuit against the credit company Equifax. The lawsuit filed is under the power parens patriae of the State to claim on behalf of all residents of Puerto Rico who have been affected by a security incident in which the personal data of over one million Puerto Ricans were leaked to third parties.

"Equifax is the custodian of personal and credit information for millions of consumers, including information on 1,000,086 Puerto Ricans. That is why your duty is to notify any cyber security problem immediately," Pierluisi said.

Equifax was aware that the personal data of the citizens had been exposed during the period from May 13, 2017 to July 30, 2017. However, they did not notify that said information had been...

June 19, 2018

Department of Justice charges charges against travel agency and its owners for appropriating $204,000 of clients

(San Juan) - The Secretary of Justice, Wanda Vázquez Garced, and the director of the Economic Crimes Division of the Department of Justice, Lourdes Acevedo, reported that they filed 64 criminal charges against Sharon Travel & Tours, Corp. and their owners for crimes of aggravated illegal appropriation and fraud.

The accused are the owners Miguel A. Rodríguez Reyes, and their children José A. Rodríguez Torres and Miguel A. Rodríguez Torres, against whom 86 complaints were filed of people who were affected in one way or another by the travel agency, ascending to $204,000.

According to the investigation, the events occurred between 2015 and 2016, when people interested in going on vacation went to the agency to buy travel packages, which they could pay in installments. Most vacation packages were to Punta Cana, Turkey and Greece, Costa Rica and Caribbean cruises.

On July 14, 2016, the agency closed when it...

➤ Original Press Release: http://www.justicia.pr.gov/departamento-de-justicia-radica-cargos-contra-agencia-de-viaje-y-sus-duenos-por-apropiarse-de-204000-de-clientes/

SOUTH DAKOTA

June 26, 2018

Four Kingsbury County Individuals Indicted on Charges Related to Failure to Pay for Grain Delivery

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley and Kingsbury County States Attorney Gregg Gass announced today that a Kingsbury County Grand Jury has indicted four owners, officers or managers of H & I Grain of Hetland, Inc. for felonies relating to the H & I’s alleged failure to pay for grain delivered to their elevators by local farmers.

Duane Jens Steffensen, 67, Hetland

one count of conspiracy to fail to notify the Public Utilities Commission of H & I Grain of Hetland Inc.’s financial status, causing financial harm to a grain supplier, class 6 felony, punishable by up to one year in the state penitentiary and/or $2,000 fine

fifteen counts of failure to notify the Public Utilities Commission of H & I Grain of Hetland Inc.’s Financial Status, causing financial harm to grain supplier, class 6 felony, punishable by up to two years in the state...

TENNESSEE

June 08, 2018

Tenn. Attorney General Seeks to Make State’s Complaint against Purdue Pharma Public

Attorney General Herbert H. Slatery III is seeking to make the State of Tennessee’s Complaint filed against Purdue Pharma on May 15, 2018 in Knox County Circuit Court available to the public. Under a court order, Purdue had ten days from the date the company was served with the lawsuit to ask the Court to keep the Complaint under seal. Purdue has now asked the Court to redact most of the State’s Complaint.

The State supported the allegations in the Complaint with notes from Purdue’s sales representatives recounting what they told health care providers in sales calls, notes from Purdue sales representatives that speak to the company’s knowledge of red flags for abuse or diversion of OxyContin, data about the company’s opioid sales in Tennessee, and other materials. Purdue marked much of this evidence as confidential. The Office of the Attorney General followed the terms of the confidentiality agreement which...


TEXAS

June 01, 2018

AG Paxton Preserves Academic Records for Texans Who Attended ITT Technical Institute

Attorney General Ken Paxton announced that Texans who attended now defunct ITT Technical Institute will be able to obtain their academic records, thanks to a settlement approved today in the long-running Chapter 7 bankruptcy case of the Indiana-based for-profit education company.

Last year, Attorney General Paxton’s office filed a federal lawsuit against ITT’s bankruptcy trustee to ensure that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board would take possession of students’ academic records, as is required by applicable state law. “ITT pulled the rug out from under Texans who were attempting to better their lives through education, and their record of classroom work could have vanished forever had we not taken legal action,” Attorney General Paxton said. “I’m pleased that my office has helped secure the academic records of former ITT students, who’ll be able to use official transcripts to obtain professional licenses, gain employment and transfer ITT credits to other institutions.” ...

UTAH

June 21, 2018

The Volkswagen Settlement

Over the last few years, attorneys in the White Collar & Commercial Enforcement and Environment Divisions of the AG’s Office have worked diligently on settlement negotiations for damage done by Volkswagen. From 2009 to 2015, VW sold more than 570,000 diesel vehicles in the United States equipped with a device that would allow them to circumvent emission standards testing. Volkswagen made false statements to consumers in their marketing, advertising these vehicles as “green” vehicles, knowing full well the vehicles emitted harmful nitrogen oxides at rates many times high than the current law permitted.

Our work had two goals.

1) Protection of the consumer from harmful business practices and fraud;
2) Restitution for the effect the cars had on the local environment.

Two years ago, Assistant Attorney General and Section Director Tom Melton reached a settlement on behalf of the Division of Consumer Protection that totaled $7.5 million in funds to Utah. Those funds...

➢ Original Press Release: https://attorneygeneral.utah.gov/vw-settlement/

VERMONT

June 13, 2018

VW to Pay $6.5 Million to Consumers, State of Vermont in Settlement

Attorney General T.J. Donovan has announced a $6.5 million settlement with Volkswagen and related entities Porsche and Audi. The settlement resolves alleged violations of Vermont’s consumer protection laws involving VW’s false advertising claims about so-called “Clean Diesel” cars and the diesel engine emissions scandal. Under the settlement, VW has agreed to pay Vermont consumers up to $1,000 for every qualifying vehicle. Vermont is one of two states in which consumers will receive restitution payments as a result of a state enforcement action.

“This is good news for Vermonters,” said Attorney General Donovan. “Vermonters expect and deserve truth in advertising – especially when it comes to making decisions involving environmental impacts,” he said.

Vermonters will receive a total of $2.9 million dollars in direct consumer restitution. Vermonters are eligible to receive payments regardless of whether they have received money from other VW-related settlements. VW will also pay $3.6 million into the State’s general...

June 27, 2018

BIPARTISAN GROUP OF ELECTED OFFICIALS AND ADVOCATES SUPPORT ATTORNEY GENERAL HERRING’S LAWSUIT AGAINST PURDUE PHARMA FOR THEIR ROLE IN CREATING THE OPIOID CRISIS

RICHMOND (June 27, 2018) — Today, Attorney General Mark Herring filed a lawsuit in Tazewell County Circuit Court against Perdue Pharma accusing the company of profiting from the opioid crisis that it helped create and prolong through a years-long campaign of lies and deceit in violation of the Virginia Consumer Protection Act. Below, elected officials and advocates voice their support for Attorney General Herring’s actions today.

“Right now we are in a fight for the lives of people in every corner of this Commonwealth who are currently battling opioid addiction or could become addicted soon. We have a responsibility to use every resource at our disposal to protect Virginians and hold companies accountable for misconduct. I applaud Attorney General Mark Herring and his team for taking bold action to fight the opioid crisis,” said Governor Ralph Northam ...


June 27, 2018

ATTORNEY GENERAL HERRING SUES PURDUE PHARMA FOR LIES THAT HELPED CREATE AND PROLONG OPIOID CRISIS

RICHMOND (June 27, 2018)—Attorney General Mark R. Herring today filed a lawsuit accusing Purdue Pharma of profiting from an opioid crisis that it helped create and prolong through a decades-long campaign of lies and misrepresentations in violation of the Virginia Consumer Protection Act. Since 2007, 8,000 Virginians have died from an opioid overdose, including 5,000 from a prescription opioid overdose. During the same period, Purdue made false claims about the purported safety, efficacy, and benefits of its opioids, including OxyContin, pumped tens of millions of pills and patches into the Commonwealth of Virginia, and reported billions in profits.

Attorney General Herring’s lawsuit was filed this morning in the Circuit Court of Tazewell County, where the rate of fatal prescription drug overdoses is more than four times the state average. The suit, which also alleges Purdue created an unlawful public nuisance, asks for injunctive relief to put an end to Purdue’s...

WASHINGTON

June 19, 2018

Philips to pay $7M for price-fixing scheme affecting millions of Washingtonians

OLYMPIA — Attorney General Bob Ferguson today announced that Philips, a multinational electronics company, will pay $7 million as part of the Attorney General’s price-fixing lawsuit against manufacturers of cathode ray tubes, or CRTs, a technology once ubiquitous in television screens and computer monitors.

Under the consent decree, filed in King County Superior Court, Philips will pay $7 million for the Attorney General’s price-fixing claims. Ferguson will distribute the bulk of the money recovered through a claims process for Washington consumers and state agencies that purchased CRTs during the conspiracy period.

The lawsuit alleges Philips and other CRT manufacturers, including LG, Panasonic, Hitachi, Chungwha, Toshiba and Samsung, engaged in a price-fixing scheme to drive up the cost of CRTs from 1995 to 2007. During those 12 years, the price-fixing conspiracy caused millions of Washington consumers to be overcharged for their CRT televisions and computer monitors. “Because of this conspiracy, Washington consumers overpaid for...


WEST VIRGINIA

June 05, 2018

Attorney General Morrisey Wins $20K Judgment, Shuts Down Cabell County Home Inspector

CHARLESTON — West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey won a civil judgment of more than $20,000 against a Cabell County home inspection business now judged to have unlawfully charged consumers for work the company failed to complete.

The court order forces Safe & Sound Inspection Services and its owner/operator, Ivan Leon Harless, to pay $15,000 in civil penalties and $5,068 in consumer restitution. It further prohibits either defendant from engaging in home inspection work until those amounts are paid.

“Consumers deserve to see work they pay for completed in a timely manner,” Attorney General Morrisey said. “Our victory reinforces the rule of law and demonstrates clear consequences for business owners who choose to violate our state’s consumer protection laws.”

The Attorney General alleged that Safe & Sound and its owner charged customers for water removal and/or mold remediation, but failed to complete the work or refund their payments. ...

June 04, 2018

**Attorney General Morrisey Secures $257K Elder Abuse Settlement, Shuts Down Meat Wholesaler**

CHARLESTON — West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey secured a $257,500 settlement against a door-to-door meat wholesaler, along with a court order that permanently prohibits it and its owner from engaging in similar business activities.

Members of the Attorney General’s elder abuse litigation and prevention unit alleged Thaxton Wholesale Meats LLC and its owner, Steven A. Thaxton, exploited elderly and vulnerable West Virginians. Both stood accused of coercing elderly consumers to purchase meat they could not afford and in quantities they could not possibly consume.

“No one should be pressured into buying goods they do not need at unreasonable prices,” Attorney General Morrisey said. “This settlement exemplifies our office’s diligent work to protect the elderly, and all West Virginia consumers, from fraud or financial exploitation.”

The settlement requires Thaxton Wholesale Meats to pay the state $250,000, while requiring that its owner Steven Thaxton pay $7,500. Both defendants are required to...


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**WYOMING**

June 06, 2018

**Huddlebag (Docket No. 190-73)**

HuddleHQ and eComHQ Inc. are Wyoming corporations with Sheridan mailing addresses. The corporations sold retro game consoles online as Huddlebag. Consumers reported that Huddlebag advertised an authentic Nintendo game console but supplied a knock off of poor quality. Other consumers complained that Huddlebag accepted payment but delivered no product at all.

After conducting an investigation, the Attorney General alleged that Huddlebag violated the Consumer Protection Act by (1) representing that it had "24,000 + Happy Customers," when it had less than 24,000 consumers and produced more BBB complaints than any other Wyoming entity over the past five years; (2) representing that it sold an authentic and licensed Nintendo game console, when it sold a knock off; (3) advertising flash sales and significant discounts, when it consistently sold the game consoles for the same price; (4) soliciting and accepting payment from consumers for merchandise that it never delivered; (5) representing that shipping...

Multistate Cases

$100 Million Multistate Settlement with Citibank for Manipulating LIBOR


States Continue Work to Reject Legislation to Limit States’ Power to Rein in Predatory Lending


4. Virginia - (2018-06-28) AG HERRING JOINS BI-PARTISAN EFFORT TO FIGHT LEGISLATION THAT WOULD TERMINATE STATES’ ABILITY TO PREVENT PREDATORY LENDING [link]

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**AGs Oppose Secretary DeVos Proposal to Delay and Replace Rule Protecting Students**

1. Illinois - (2018-06-12) ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN OPPOSES U.S. EDUCATION SECRETARY DEVOS’ PROPOSAL TO DELAY & REPLACE RULE PROTECTING STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ONLINE EDUCATION [link]

2. New York (2018-06-12) - A.G. Underwood Leads Coalition Of 16 Attorneys General Opposing Secretary Devos' Proposal To Delay And Replace Rule Protecting Students Enrolled In Online Education [link]

3. Rhode Island - (2018-06-12) AG Kilmartin Joins Coalition of 16 Attorneys General Opposing Secretary DeVos' Proposal to Delay and Replace Rule Protecting Students Enrolled in Online Education [link]

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**AGs Urge CFPB To Retain Public Access to Consumer Complaint Database**


2. Illinois - (2018-06-05) ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN URGES CFPB TO RETAIN PUBLIC ACCESS TO CONSUMER COMPLAINT DATABASE [link]

4. New Jersey - (2018-06-04) AG Opposes Federal Plan to End Consumer Complaint Database: Says New Jersey Consumers Have a Right to Know
   https://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases18/pr20180604a.html


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Coalition Attorneys General in Fight to Protect the Affordable Care Act


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New York & Massachusetts to Sue Trump Administration over Association Health Plans


Medicaid Fraud

Nationwide Healthcare Fraud Takedown

1. Florida - (2018-06-28) Massive Nationwide Health Care Fraud Takedown
   http://www.myfloridalegal.com/newsrel.nsf/newsreleases/750F1F9E9C8DBE598525828A005883DE

2. Georgia - (2018-06-28) Carr: Georgia Medicaid Fraud Control Unit Participates in National Healthcare Fraud Takedown

3. Indiana - (2018-06-28) AG Hill participates in investigations as part of nationwide healthcare fraud takedown

4. Louisiana - (2018-06-29) National Health Care Fraud Takedown a Success in Louisiana
   https://www.ag.state.la.us/Article.aspx/8589?TypId=1&CatId=2

ARKANSAS

June 29, 2018
Rutledge Announces Arrest of Little Rock Man for Medicaid Fraud

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge today announced the arrest of a Pulaski County man for scamming $2.2 million from the Arkansas Medicaid Program. “Robin Raveendran, a known Medicaid expert, knew how to exploit the program for self benefit,” said Attorney General Rutledge. “He took advantage of a system which provides important care to Arkansans by misrepresenting more than 20,000 services totaling over $2 million. As Attorney General, it is important for me to hold criminals accountable in order to deter future fraud within the Medicaid system.”

Robin Raveendran, 62, of Little Rock, was arrested by agents with the Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit Thursday night, and transported to Independence County. He is charged with two counts of Medicaid fraud, one Class A felony and one Class B felony. He is accused of coordinating an effort which reimbursed his company for 20,109 illegally billed mental health services for a…


June 07, 2018
Rutledge Announces Pulaski County Man Sentenced for Medicaid Fraud

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge today announced the conviction of a Pulaski County man on Medicaid fraud charges.
Emanuel Darrough pleaded guilty to Medicaid fraud in Pulaski County Circuit Court. He was sentenced to 7 years probation and must pay $11,000 in restitution to the Arkansas Medicaid Program Trust Fund and $250 in fines and court costs.

“Emanuel Darrough is now paying for the crimes he committed by taking advantage of a vital safety net for many Arkansans,” said Attorney General Rutledge. “Investigators and attorneys from the Attorney General’s Office will continue to hold those people accountable who take advantage of the Medicaid system and investigate and prosecute these crimes.”

Darrough, 49, of Little Rock, pleaded guilty to one count of Medicaid fraud, a Class B felony, for billing for services not rendered.

An attorney with the Attorney General’s office was sworn in as Special Deputy Prosecuting Attorney by Sixth Judicial...


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**CONNECTICUT**

June 21, 2018

**State Initiates False Claims Act, Breach of Contract Lawsuit against Norwich Behavioral Health Provider**

The state has initiated a lawsuit alleging violations of the Connecticut False Claims Act and breach of contract by a licensed professional counselor from Norwich who is accused of billing the state's Medicaid program for services not provided, Attorney General George Jepsen and state Department of Social Services Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby said today. The lawsuit also alleges that the provider sought to conceal the scheme by failing to maintain required records or destroying records.

Susan Britt is a licensed professional counselor who resides and practices in Norwich, running her counseling practice – known as An Inner Peace – out of her home. Britt was formerly enrolled as a behavioral health provider in the Connecticut Medical Assistance Program (CMAP), which includes the state's Medicaid program.

The state alleges that from at least January 2013 through September 2016, Britt engaged in a scheme to falsely bill the CMAP for services that she...


June 18, 2018

**State Reaches Settlement in False Claims Act Lawsuit against Waterbury Behavioral Health Provider**

The state has reached a $200,000 settlement with a Waterbury behavioral health clinician, along with two behavioral health practices he owns or controls, that resolves a lawsuit alleging
the providers engaged in a long-term scheme to defraud Connecticut’s Medicaid program. The settlement excludes these providers from participation in the Connecticut Medicaid program for a decade, Attorney General George Jepsen and state Department of Social Services (DSS) Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby said today. Elijah Caldwell, a licensed clinical social worker, is the owner and operator of A Prospering Vision, LLC, and the founder and president of Home of Hope, Inc., both located in Waterbury. In a lawsuit filed in October 2017 brought under the Connecticut False Claims Act, the state alleged that, between March 2013 and December 2016, Caldwell billed the Connecticut Medical Assistance Program (CMAP) – which includes the state’s Medicaid program – for claims for reimbursement for behavioral health services...


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HAWAII

June 07, 2018

ATTORNEY GENERAL URGES SENIORS TO WATCH FOR FRAUD AS THEY RECEIVE NEW MEDICARE CARDS

HONOLULU – Attorney General Russell Suzuki joins the U.S. Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) and the State Executive Office on Aging, to alert the public to be on the watch for fraud relating to the issuance of new Medicare cards. The new cards will be arriving in mailboxes shortly and it is a time that unscrupulous individuals may try to take advantage and scam money from unsuspecting seniors. Medicare recipients should know the facts and take steps to protect themselves.

Things you should know to help you keep your new card safe:

- The new Medicare cards began rolling out to Hawaii Residents via US mail, since the last week in May, and residents will continue receiving them through July.
- Multiple cards to one household may arrive at different times.
- Your new card will not include your social Security number, gender, birthdate or signature. Medicare...


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KANSAS

June 19, 2018

Junction City woman ordered to repay $1,600 for Medicaid fraud

OTTAWA – (June 19, 2018) – A Junction City woman was ordered yesterday to repay more than
$1,600 to the Kansas Medicaid program after being found guilty of Medicaid Fraud-related charges, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt said.

Ruby Irene Powell, 41, pleaded no contest in April to one felony count of making a false claim to the Medicaid program. Franklin County District Judge Douglas P. Witteman yesterday ordered the defendant to repay $1,607.27 to the Kansas Medicaid program. Judge Witteman also sentenced Powell to 12 months of probation with an underlying prison sentence of six months. Convictions such as this one may also result in a period during which the defendant is prohibited from being paid wages through a government health care program.

An investigation by the attorney general’s Medicaid Fraud and Abuse Division revealed that Powell had billed the Kansas Medicaid program as the personal care attendant for her mother to...


MISSISSIPPI

June 15, 2018

Former Health Care Worker Arrested for Stealing Patient’s Money

A former certified nursing assistant of a Meridian health care facility faces 10 years in prison for allegedly stealing money from a patient, announced Attorney General Jim Hood.

LaBarbara Haralson, 33, of Meridian, turned herself in Friday on a one count felony indictment of exploitation of a vulnerable person and was booked into the Lauderdale County jail. The indictment states she illegally cashed a patient’s check worth more than $250 while working as a CNA at The Oaks Rehab and Healthcare Center.

If convicted, Haralson faces 10 years in prison and up to $10,000 in fines. A charge is merely an accusation, and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

This case was investigated by Trey Rogers and will be prosecuted by Special Assistant Attorneys General Parker Wiseman and Mark Ward, each with the Attorney General’s Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.


NEVADA

June 11, 2018

Attorney General Laxalt Announces Sentencing of Home Health Worker

Las Vegas, NV – Nevada Attorney General Adam Paul Laxalt announced that David Benke, 45, of
Las Vegas, was sentenced today in a Medicaid fraud case involving the failure to maintain adequate records to substantiate Medicaid claims. Benke was sentenced for one gross misdemeanor offense of Intentional Failure to Maintain Adequate Records by District Court Judge Stephany Miley. Miley sentenced Benke to 364 days incarceration, suspended, and payment of $2,346 in restitution. The fraud occurred from January 2014 to April 2015.

“Individuals that commit fraud against the Medicaid system have stolen from the Medicaid system and Nevada taxpayers,” said Laxalt.

The investigation began after the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) received information from Medicaid’s Surveillance and Utilization Review (SUR) unit that Benke had allegedly not provided home health services to a Medicaid recipient. The investigation revealed that Benke had produced fictitious documentation, including progress notes and time and attendance documents, to Advanced Personal...


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NEW JERSEY

June 13, 2018

**NJ Office of Insurance Fraud Prosecutor Announces Indictments in Three Elder Abuse Cases Ahead of “World Elder Abuse Awareness Day”**

TRENTON – In anticipation of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (W.E.A.A.D) on Friday, Attorney General Gurbir S. Grewal and the Office of the Insurance Fraud Prosecutor (OIFP) today announced charges against five individuals accused of abusing elderly, disabled adults in their care.

To mark the international W.E.A.A.D. event on Friday, the OIFP will host a statewide symposium of government and private organizations dedicated to protecting seniors from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The “Building Strong Support for Elders” event will provide the public with resources and information on how to identify, prevent, and report crimes against the elderly. “Elder abuse is a cruel and despicable crime targeting those unable to protect themselves,” said Attorney General Grewal. “World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is an opportunity for New Jersey to unite with communities around the world in denouncing the financial, physical, and emotional abuse or neglect of our vulnerable senior citizens, and to demonstrate our...

[Original Press Release](https://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases18/pr20180613b.html)
NEW YORK

June 25, 2018

A.G. Underwood Announces Sentencing Of Registered Nurse Who Stole Over $390,000 From Medicaid

WESTCHESTER — Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced the sentencing of registered nurse Collins Anyanwu-Mueller, 48, of Seymour, Connecticut, for stealing over $390,000 from Medicaid. On November 2, 2017, Anyanwu-Mueller pleaded guilty to Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a Class D felony, after an investigation conducted by the Attorney General’s office revealed that, over the course of nearly five years, Anyanwu-Mueller submitted false claims for private duty nursing services that he never provided to severely disabled patients.

Today, Anyanwu-Mueller was sentenced in Westchester County Court in White Plains by the Honorable Barry H. Warhit to one year in jail. Prior to sentencing Anyanwu-Mueller paid the State of New York $25,000 and has agreed to pay the remaining $367,954 in restitution owed.

“The Medicaid home care program is meant to provide vital care to severely disabled New Yorkers,” said Attorney General Underwood. “Fraudsters who rip off Medicaid will be caught and...”


June 08, 2018

A.G. Underwood And Comptroller DiNapoli Announce Guilty Plea Of Queens Pharmacy Owner For $1.5 Million Medicaid Fraud Scheme

QUEENS — Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood and State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli announced today that Arkady Goldin, 40, of Brooklyn, and Value Pharmacy, Inc. (“Value”) — a pharmacy formerly located in Corona, Queens before re-locating to its current location in Lynbrook, NY — entered felony guilty pleas in Supreme Court, Queens County admitting to defrauding the State’s Medicaid program out of $1.5 million. The case was investigated and prosecuted as part of the Attorney General and State Comptroller’s Joint Task Force on Public Integrity.

“We have zero tolerance for those who defraud the state’s Medicaid program,” said Attorney General Underwood. “We will continue to aggressively pursue all individuals who steal from Medicaid to enrich themselves at the expense of those who need the program for their fundamental health care.”

“Arkady Goldin billed Medicaid millions for cancer medications he never dispensed,” State Comptroller DiNapoli said. “Thanks to our partnership with the Attorney...

NORTH CAROLINA

June 29, 2018
Attorney General Josh Stein Announces 2 Indictments in $4 Million Medicaid Fraud Scheme

(raleigh) Attorney General Josh Stein today announced that Catinia Farrington and Haydn Thomas of Durham were charged in federal district court with conspiracy to commit health care fraud, health care fraud, aggravated identity theft, and tax evasion. Thomas has also been charged with an additional charge of money laundering. The indictment alleges that Farrington and Thomas illegally used Medicaid numbers obtained from another provider to bill false claims to Medicaid.

“This indictment alleges these individuals stole private patient information to cheat the Medicaid program and taxpayers out of millions of dollars,” said Attorney General Stein. “My office will continue to fight against these fraudulent and wasteful practices.”

Farrington, who owned Durham County Mental Health and Behavioral Health Services, and Thomas allegedly obtained the Medicaid numbers for thousands of dental patients, and then submitted $4 million worth of false claims to Medicaid for mental health services that were not provided to...


June 12, 2018
Attorney General Josh Stein Announces Health Care Fraud Sentencing

(raleigh) Attorney General Josh Stein announced today that Dr. Duke Ellington Ellis, II was sentenced today in federal district court in the Middle District of North Carolina for health care fraud and false medical entries. Ellis was paid to help Nature’s Reflections, LLC, a North Carolina company based in Durham, submit fraudulent billing claims to Medicaid. He was sentenced to thirteen months imprisonment followed by three years of post-release supervision and was ordered to pay $1,077,967.31 in restitution to the North Carolina Medicaid Program.

“Cheating Medicaid wastes tax dollars and can cause harm to patients in need of medical care,” said Attorney General Stein. “Many of these patients are among our most vulnerable citizens.”

Ellis’ conviction resolves allegations that he was paid by a behavioral health company, Nature’s Reflections, LLC, to forge the signature of a licensed psychologist on fraudulent medical service orders for Medicaid recipients between 2011 and 2013....

June 01, 2018

**Attorney General Josh Stein Announces $325,000 Settlement over Medicaid Fraud**

(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein announced today that the State of North Carolina has agreed to settle allegations against Atlanticare Home Care Agency involving the submission of fraudulent claims to the North Carolina Medicaid program. According to the allegations, Atlanticare, a Greenville company, allowed improperly qualified aides to serve patients and produced false documents in response to requests for verification. Atlanticare and its owner, Elbert Moore, will return $325,000 to the North Carolina Medicaid Program.

“When North Carolina’s taxpayers pay into the Medicaid program, they expect that money to be used correctly,” said Attorney General Josh Stein. “That is why my office takes Medicaid fraud seriously. We will continue our work to fight against misuse and waste.”

This settlement was obtained with the assistance of the North Carolina Department of Justice, Medicaid Investigations Division, and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Medical Assistance – Clinical...


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June 01, 2018

**Attorney General Josh Stein Announces Health Care Fraud and Aggravated Identity Theft Convictions**

(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein announced today that Dr. Michael Alston Smith pled guilty to drug distribution, health care fraud, and aggravated identity theft in United States District Court in Charlotte. The conviction resolves allegations that Dr. Smith, a former Mount Holly family practice physician, illegally distributed controlled substances to female patients in exchange for sex acts.

“This doctor caused immense harm to patients struggling to combat opioid addiction, and in the process, cheated Medicaid and wasted taxpayer money,” said Attorney General Stein. “My office will continue to investigate and prosecute healthcare providers who commit fraud and abuse.”

Dr. Smith operated Mt. Holly Family Practice, Inc., in Mount Holly and had received approval from the Drug Enforcement Administration to operate an office-based opioid treatment program to treat patients with pain management and substance abuse issues. Dr. Smith began soliciting sexual encounters from female patients who he was treating for pain...

June 01, 2018

**Attorney General Josh Stein Announces $100,000 Settlement Over Medicaid Fraud**
(RALEIGH) Attorney General Josh Stein announced today that the State of North Carolina has agreed to settle allegations against Brooke Stiles, D.D.S., over fraudulent Medicaid claims. Stiles allegedly billed for services that were not medically necessary, had no supporting clinical documentation, and/or were performed in violation of Medicaid policy. Stiles, who practiced in Kenansville, will repay $100,000 to the Medicaid program.

“My office is focused on Medicaid providers who engage in fraudulent practices,” said Attorney General Josh Stein. “Doing so wastes taxpayer dollars and is unacceptable.”

This settlement was obtained with the assistance of the North Carolina Department of Justice, Medicaid Investigations Division, and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Medical Assistance – Clinical Policy and Program Integrity.


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**PENNSYLVANIA**

June 29, 2018

**Attorney General Shapiro Announces 15 Arrests in Statewide Medicaid Fraud Sweep**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced felony Medicaid fraud charges against 15 people in seven counties across Pennsylvania. The Office of Attorney General conducted the arrests as it participated in a nationwide health-care fraud initiative this week. The charges, arising out of 12 investigations, identified more than $237,000 in fraudulent reimbursements paid by Pennsylvania’s Medicaid Program. The initiative was coordinated by the Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Justice Department.

“These Medicaid fraud cases involve 15 defendants who stole tax dollars, falsified records for care they were supposed to provide, and lied for personal gain,” Attorney General Josh Shapiro said. “Medicaid provides essential medical care to low-income Pennsylvanians and children with serious medical conditions. Criminals who defraud Medicaid are stealing from our most vulnerable Pennsylvanians. I’m holding them accountable.”

Southeast Pennsylvania
Peter Jarbo, of Philadelphia, was charged in Montgomery County with Medicaid fraud, theft...

June 19, 2018

**CASE UPDATE: Erie Aide who Poured Scalding Water on Disabled Patient Pleads Guilty to Felony Charges**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro today announced that an Erie man who poured scalding water on a disabled man, severely burning him, pleaded guilty to felony charges. Akeem Nixon, 27, of German Street, Erie, plead guilty to neglect of a care-dependent person and aggravated assault — first-degree felonies — as a result of the incident which happened last June at Lakeshore Community Services in Erie. The victim, a 38-year-old man with cerebral palsy, was hospitalized for 17 days and suffered second-degree burns over 20 percent of his body.

“This defendant assaulted a disabled man in his care with scalding water,” Attorney General Shapiro said. “We’re holding him accountable for his crimes. Protecting care-dependent Pennsylvanians from neglect and assaults like in this case is a high priority of my office.” Nixon was charged in November 2017 based on medical evidence of the burns, statements from the victim and safety protocols in place at...


June 07, 2018

**CASE UPDATE: Behavioral Health Worker Charged with $211K in Medicaid Fraud Involving Autistic Children Pleads Guilty**

HARRISBURG — Attorney General Josh Shapiro announced today that a Philadelphia behavioral specialist and mobile therapist charged with Medicaid fraud of more than $210,000 involving three different facilities has pleaded guilty in Delaware County Court. As part of the scheme, the therapist falsified the medical records of autistic children and submitted fake claims for reimbursement.

LaGracia Burnett, 59, of Philadelphia, worked for three behavioral health providers in Philadelphia, Montgomery and Chester counties, and billed for fabricated, overlapping services between January 2013 and May 2016. During this time, she was also working as a per-diem substitute teacher for the Philadelphia School District. Burnett falsely submitted time sheets for over $211,942 in services that she did not provide to children — many of whom were diagnosed with autism. As part of her scheme to steal Medicaid funds, she falsified medical records of these children and submitted them fraudulently for reimbursement.

“When people commit Medicaid...

Consumer Advocacy

AGs and FTC Partner to Stop Scams Against Small Businesses


CALIFORNIA

June 25, 2018

Attorney General Becerra Issues Consumer Alert on Price Gouging Following State of Emergency in Lake County

SACRAMENTO – California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today issued a consumer alert following the Governor’s declaration of a state of emergency in Lake County due to a widespread wildfire. Attorney General Becerra reminds all Californians that price gouging during a state of emergency is illegal under Penal Code Section 396.

“Families in Lake County are in the midst of dealing with a devastating wildfire. They should not have to worry about whether they’re being illegally cheated out of fair prices,” said Attorney General Becerra. “Our State’s price gouging law protects people impacted by an emergency from illegal price gouging on housing, gas, food, and other essential supplies. I encourage anyone who has been the victim of price gouging, or who has information regarding potential price gouging, to immediately file a complaint through my Office’s website or call (800) 952-5225, or to contact their local police department or sheriff’s office.”

California law generally...

June 12, 2018

Attorney General Becerra Announces $37.5 Million in State Grants to Combat Illegal Tobacco Use Among Minors

SACRAMENTO – Today, California Attorney General Xavier Becerra announced $37.5 million in state grant funding to combat the illegal sale of cigarettes and tobacco products to minors. The grants to 71 local entities throughout the state will fund operations, retailer training programs, the installation of signage, youth outreach, tobacco retail license inspections, training for sworn personnel, and other activities.

"Tobacco remains a very serious public health concern," said Attorney General Becerra. “These grants will provide additional tools to law enforcement to help educate kids about the dangers of smoking. The grants will also help local communities enforce laws against selling tobacco products to minors. These grants are an important step toward reducing illegal sales and building a healthier California.”

Proposition 56 (Prop. 56), the California Healthcare, Research and Prevention Tobacco Tax Act of 2016, was approved by voters in November 2016. Effective April 2017, it raised the cigarette tax by $2.00 per...


June 11, 2018

Attorney General Becerra Decrees Congress’ Failure to Preserve Net Neutrality Rules

SACRAMENTO – California Attorney General Xavier Becerra issued the following statement today after the House of Representatives refused to permit a timely vote under the Congressional Review Act to preserve federal net neutrality rules prescribing free and open access to the internet:

“Today is the day that the Trump Administration’s decision to restrict Americans’ access to the internet goes into effect. The U.S. House of Representatives had the opportunity to ensure that Americans continued to have unfettered access to the internet by voting down the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) repeal of net neutrality rules. But it went AWOL.

“As a result of this inaction, starting today internet service providers have the power to force websites to pay fees for faster internet speeds and limit consumers’ ability to access the internet content of their choice. In this 21st century global economy, access to a free and open internet is imperative. It has become...

June 01, 2018

Attorney General Becerra Issues Consumer Alert After TEACH Grants Are Wrongly Converted to Loans

SACRAMENTO – California Attorney General Xavier Becerra today issued a consumer alert following news that federal grants awarded to some prospective teachers have been wrongly converted to loans that must be repaid with interest. The Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) grant program is run by the U.S. Department of Education and provides up to $4,000 per year for students who intend to become teachers of a high-need field in a low-income area. Grant recipients must agree to teach full-time for four years and submit documentation of their service to the U.S. Department of Education. Last year, 3,822 students in California received TEACH grants. Many teachers have found that their TEACH grants have been converted to loans even though they have fulfilled the requirements of the grant program. Small clerical mistakes, such as a missing signature or date, or a delay in processing paperwork by the servicer,...


COLORADO

June 26, 2018

Colorado Attorney General Cynthia Coffman Announces 2018 Legislative Successes

DENVER — Attorney General Cynthia H. Coffman proposed her most aggressive agenda to date in the 2018 legislative session, and all of the bills will become effective in the coming months. “In my final year as the Attorney General, I focused my legislative efforts on ensuring that consumer data is protected, enhancing protections for victims of domestic violence and revenge porn, enhancing our ability to combat Medicaid Fraud and patient abuse in nursing homes and long-term care facilities, ensuring the continuance of important task force work to fight the opioid crisis, and strengthening the Safe2Tell program,” said Attorney General Coffman. “It has been an honor to work with members on both sides of the aisle in the Colorado General Assembly over the past 4 years to pass legislation that will have a lasting positive impact for Coloradans.”

About the Bills:
HB18-1128 requires both private and public entities in Colorado that maintain personal information on...

DELAWARE

June 01, 2018
DOJ Warns Delawareans About Latest Round of Scam Jury Duty Calls
The Delaware Department of Justice Consumer Protection Unit is alerting residents that a phone scam regarding missed jury duty service is again making its way through Delaware, including recently in Kent County.
In the most recent scam, consumers receive a call from a live person claiming to be calling from a court office (such as the “Kent County Civil Processing Unit”) and that bench warrants have been issued for the consumer’s arrest due to their failure to appear for jury duty. Consumers have reported that were told that, in order to avoid arrest, they must to pay a fine via a money order or gift card purchased at a convenience store or pharmacy. The scam has included someone who refers to themselves as a major and who provides a number with a (302) area code to call back when they are ready to provide the payment.
According to Delaware’s courts, Delawareans eligible...


FLORIDA

June 15, 2018
Attorney General Bondi Offers Consumer Safety Tips on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—In recognition of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Attorney General Pam Bondi is offering information on common scams that target senior citizens and tips to help avoid these types of scams. More than 3.2 million seniors call Florida home and thousands more reside throughout the state during the winter months, making Florida a target for scammers who prey on seniors.
“Florida’s seniors deserve our honor and respect. They served in WWII and Korea, made our economy boom and played a major role in strengthening our state and nation,” said Attorney General Bondi. “Anyone who would prey on these great citizens in their golden years is lower than dirt, and my Consumer Protection Division will aggressively investigate anyone targeting Florida seniors.”
The following are some common scams used to target senior citizens:
• Grandparents Scam: Imposters pose as law enforcement officers or attorneys and call grandparents claiming that their grandchild is in...

June 01, 2018

**Attorney General Bondi Releases 2018 Hurricane Preparedness Guide**

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—The 2018 Atlantic Hurricane Season begins today and Attorney General Pam Bondi is asking Floridians to be prepared. As a peninsula state with warm waters, Florida is especially vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes, and Attorney General Bondi is encouraging citizens to review her 2018 Hurricane Preparedness Guide to prepare for a storm or common scams that could arise in the aftermath.

“During the past two hurricane seasons, multiple storms struck Florida leaving debris and flooding throughout our state. I am calling on all Floridians to start preparing for the 2018 Atlantic Hurricane Season now, to protect family and property,” said Attorney General Bondi. “My Hurricane Preparedness Guide provides a detailed checklist of items you will need in the event a hurricane strikes near you.”

The guide includes information about how to avoid scams before and after a storm, a full supply list and other important preparation tips. Some of the...


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**GEORGIA**

June 28, 2018

**SCAM ALERT: Carr Warns of Email Scam Targeting Faith-Based Communities**

ATLANTA, GA - The Office of the Attorney General has learned of an email scam targeting parishioners of several Catholic churches in Georgia.

“As cyber threats continue to evolve, we are making cybersecurity education for our small businesses, local governments, houses of worship and non-profits a priority,” said Attorney General Chris Carr. “Up to this point, this particular scam has been aimed at Catholic parishioners, but we believe others could be targeted in the same manner. Join us in helping raise awareness about this type of scheme to prevent well-meaning people from being conned out of their hard-earned money.”

In one version of this imposter fraud scheme, con artists send out emails purporting to be from the Pastor of the church asking for emergency donations to help someone in need. The email, which uses the Pastor’s name but a phony email address, instructs the recipient to provide the money by purchasing an...

June 27, 2018

CONSUMER ALERT: New Georgia Law Makes Credit Freezes Free Effective July 1

ATLANTA, GA – This year, Governor Deal signed Senate Bill 376, allowing Georgians to freeze and thaw their credit reports free of charge beginning July 1, 2018.

“A credit freeze can be a powerful and pro-active weapon against identity theft,” said Attorney General Chris Carr. “We hope this new law will encourage more Georgians to use this simple tool to protect themselves from fraud.”

When a freeze is in place, credit reporting agencies cannot release consumers’ credit reports or credit scores unless consumers first remove the freeze by providing a PIN or password. Since lenders and creditors rely on access to consumers’ credit files to determine their creditworthiness, denying such access through a freeze makes it very difficult for an identity thief to open a new credit account or get a loan in a victim’s name.

To place a credit freeze on your file, you must contact each of the three major credit...


June 04, 2018

CONSUMER ALERT: Attorney General Chris Carr Warns Consumers of Timeshare Resale Scams

ATLANTA, GA – Attorney General Chris Carr is warning consumers about scams in which criminals pose as representatives of vacation travel agencies, title companies or escrow agents to trick timeshare owners into paying up-front fees for timeshare resales that never happen. Owners of timeshares located in Mexico are often targets of this scam. Here is how it typically works. The timeshare owners receive a phone call or email from someone purportedly working for a travel company. The caller tells the consumers that there is a buyer interested in purchasing their timeshare property.

While the timeshare sale is supposedly pending, the scammers tell the consumers there are fees and/or taxes connected with the sale that must be paid up-front. Consumers are instructed to wire the money to an agent, often located in another country. The fraudulent company continues to collect other fees from the sellers until either informing victims that the sale has...


INDIANA

June 01, 2018

State officials remind Hoosiers to be vigilant against fraud during flood recovery

With 35 counties having declared local emergencies following severe flooding earlier this year, the Office of Attorney General Curtis Hill and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security are
warning residents to beware of “storm chasers” and other scammers. “Storm chasers” are companies that target communities after severe weather events and sell their services to repair damaged homes and other property. These individuals typically will conduct door-to-door sales in storm-ravaged communities, urging consumers to immediately sign contracts with their companies. They often promise to assist consumers in negotiations with insurance companies at little to no out-of-pocket cost to customers. Some companies may seek immediate down payments for future work. Hoosiers should be wary of such operations as these crews may perform sub-quality work or even fail to perform the work at all after receiving payment.

In April of 2017, Attorney General Hill launched the “Double Check Before You Write a Check” campaign to remind...


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**IOWA**

June 18, 2018

**Miller creates group to advise JUUL on underage use of e-cigarettes**

Fourteen officials, including former attorneys general and public health experts, will advise JUUL Labs on how to keep its e-cigarette products out of the hands of young people. The group is led by Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller, who recruited the bipartisan group, and includes former Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon. In April, JUUL Labs sought guidance from Miller, who has a long record of taking on the tobacco industry. As attorneys general, Miller and Nixon were involved in the $200 billion settlement with the tobacco industry in 1998. The group will examine how to avoid the unintended consequences of attracting youth and non-smokers to nicotine products.

The group will convene as the focus grows on underage use of e-cigarettes. In June, the Centers for Disease Control released its 2017 National Youth Tobacco Survey, showing that e-cigarettes are used by 11.7 percent of high school students surveyed and 3.3 percent of middle school students...


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**KANSAS**

June 27, 2018

**Consumer Alert: Storm damage in Greenwood, Butler counties could attract illegal contractors**

TOPEKA – (June 27, 2018) – Following last night’s tornado and hail damage in Greenwood and
Butler counties, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt is urging local residents to proceed with caution to avoid scams by fraudulent contractors. “After storm damage, our instinct is to clean up and make repairs as quickly as possible,” Schmidt said. “Unfortunately, fraudulent contractors often rush into storm-damaged areas to take advantage of local residents in their time of need. It’s important to keep your guard up to avoid becoming victimized again by a scammer.”

In particular, Schmidt reminded residents that, with few exceptions, roofing contractors operating in Kansas are required to register with the attorney general’s office. The requirement to register with the attorney general’s office is in addition to any other local requirements that may be imposed by cities or counties. The online directory of registrations is available at www.InYourCornerKansas.org.

The attorney general’s office also recommends the...


KENTUCKY

June 25, 2018


FRANKFORT, KY. (June 25, 2018) – Attorney General Andy Beshear issued a Scam Alert today to warn Kentuckians of a new phone scam where con artists claim to be Federal Social Security Administration agents calling to notify you that your Social Security number has been stolen. Beshear said his office received a report of the scam after a caller tricked a Jefferson County victim into disclosing her Social Security number and paying a fee to receive a new Social Security number and card.

Beshear said the fake federal agent demanded a payment via a stored-value card and the Louisville resident lost $600 to the scam.

“I urge all Kentuckians to hang up on any caller who asks for your Social Security number,” said Beshear. “Never provide your Social Security number or other sensitive information, like your bank account or credit card number, over the phone – unless you are confident who you are...

➢ Original Press Release: https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=596

June 19, 2018

Beshear: Stop Sending State Dollars to Opioid Companies

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 19, 2018) – Attorney General Andy Beshear is urging state officials and board members to stop investing state taxpayer dollars and retirement contributions in companies that have profited from the opioid crisis.

Beshear sent letters Tuesday to the Kentucky Retirement Systems (KRS) and the Kentucky
Teachers’ Retirement System (KTRS), urging the agencies to stop investing funds in the six opioid manufactures and distributors that his office is currently suing over their role in fueling the state’s opioid epidemic. Similar letters will be sent to other state agencies and quasi-state agencies that have invested in opioid companies.

To date, Beshear has sued AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health, Endo Pharmaceuticals, Johnson and Johnson, McKesson Corporation and Walgreens for their role in fueling the opioid epidemic.

Beshear said KRS and KTRS board executives and trustees should take immediate steps to review investments, and in accordance with their fiduciary duty and in compliance with all applicable...

➢ Original Press Release: https://kentucky.gov/Pages/Activity-stream.aspx?n=AttorneyGeneral&prId=592

LOUISIANA

June 12, 2018

Attorney General Jeff Landry Offers Tips to Protect Louisiana Children from Hot Cars

BATON ROUGE, LA – With schools out and temperatures rising, Attorney General Jeff Landry is encouraging Louisiana parents and guardians to practice safety when it comes to children and hot vehicles.

“In the last 20 years, over 700 children in America have died after being left in a car,” said General Landry. “So I implore all citizens to take the steps necessary to help prevent fatalities like these in the future.”

To ensure children are not left in hot vehicles, General Landry encourages the following tips:

Leave something in the backseat that you cannot be without - such as a cellphone, a purse, or a shoe. When you go to retrieve it at the end of the ride, you will notice your child.

Sit your younger (or quieter) child behind the front passenger seat, where he or she is more likely to catch your eye.

Keep a stuffed animal in the car...


MAINE

June 05, 2018

Attorney General Janet Mills receives Innovation in Financial Capability Award

HOULTON, ME – Last week Maine Attorney General Janet Mills was honored at Region Two School of Applied Technology in Houlton with the 2018 Financial Capability Innovation Award, presented by the nation’s leading technology innovator, EVERFI, Inc. The award recognized the Attorney General’s significant efforts to improve the financial literacy of Maine students.
through unique digital learning initiatives. This important initiative has empowered approximately four thousand Maine students in forty-five different communities. “As the state’s chief law enforcement officer, I take seriously the responsibility to protect Maine citizens from fraud and equip them with tools to be savvy consumers. We are honored to be recognized for the financial education we’ve provided to high school students over the years,” stated Attorney General Mills. “My office strongly believes in the importance of teaching financial literacy to ensure our students grow up to become financially astute and stable adults. We’re proud to support educators...


MARYLAND
June 06, 2018
Attorney General Frosh: Beware of Charity Scams in the Wake of the Ellicott City Floods
BALTIMORE, MD (June 6, 2018) - In the wake of devastating flooding in Ellicott City, many Marylanders may feel compelled to donate funds to assist business owners and residents. Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh and Secretary of State John C. Wobensmith are advising Marylanders to be wary of appeals for charitable donations and to donate wisely. “Natural disasters often bring out the best in people, with neighbors helping neighbors,” said Attorney General Frosh. “Unfortunately, disasters also can bring out the worst in people, particularly those seeking to profit from the misfortune of others. It is always wise to research a charity first before donating, and avoid any charity or fundraiser that is reluctant to provide information on how donations are used.” “In the aftermath of these devastating floods, scam artists may attempt to prey on your generosity and use all types of scams, frauds or deceptive acts to line their own...


MICHIGAN
June 27, 2018
Schuette Reminds Residents about July Consumer Education Programs
LANSING – Attorney General Bill Schuette is encouraging Michigan residents to learn more about the consumer education programs offered through his office in the month of July. The Department of Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division offers a variety of programs throughout the month aimed at keeping Michigan consumers safe and up-to-date on the latest scams.
The July Programs Include:
Home Repair & Improvement - Learn the telltale signs of home repair scams, unscrupulous contractors, and how to navigate the home improvement process.

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Phone, Mail, & e-Scams - Learn the signs of scams prevalent in phone calls, mail, email, and texts, along with steps to take to minimize your risk of being victimized.
Identity Theft - Learn about the signs of identity theft, how to protect your personal information online and off, and what to do if you become an identity theft victim
Online Safety - Learn how to protect your devices,...

Original Press Release: https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-471680--.00.html

June 18, 2018
Schuette: Free Credit Freezes Available to Consumers
LANSING- Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette is today reminding Michigan residents that effective June 17th, 2018, free credit freezes became available to all Michigan residents, according to a new state law.
“Following multiple security breaches that have exposed personal information of millions of Michiganders, I worked with the legislature to make sure that after a breach, it would not cost those exposed their hard-earned dollars when they weren’t at fault,” said Schuette. “I applaud our legislature for taking the important step to protect Michigan residents, and I encourage those who have been impacted and those who want to limit who has access to their credit reports to take advantage of our new zero-cost credit freeze law.”
A credit freeze is a temporary block on third parties’ ability to access a consumer’s credit report. Credit reporting agencies can no longer charge fees associated with freezing a consumer’s credit report. The benefit of freezing...

Original Press Release: https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-470972--.00.html

June 18, 2018
After Catastrophic Floods, Schuette Reminds Upper Peninsula Residents about Available Resources
LANSING – Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette today reminds Michigan Upper Peninsula residents about resources available to them after catastrophic flash flooding that occurred over the weekend.
“It is vital to the state of Michigan that we help protect and keep Michiganders safe during times of need,” said Schuette. “The catastrophic floods devastating Michigan’s Copper Country are horrible in their own right and it’s important that residents know how to protect themselves against unscrupulous individuals who often take advantage in the aftermath of these types of situations.”
Emergency Resources for Residents Impacted by Floods
Full shelter resources are available for those in the Upper Peninsula who have severe damage to their homes. Services include food, cots, blankets, and pillows. The facility is open and
staffed all night long. The shelter is provided by the American Red Cross and is located at the Calumet Colosseum, 110 Red Jacket Road, Calumet, MI 49913. Local authorities advise...

- **Original Press Release**: [https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-471029--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/ag/0,4534,7-359-82916_81983_47203-471029--,00.html)

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**NEW JERSEY**

June 13, 2018

**Notice of Emergency Regulations**

Description: The New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement has promulgated emergency regulations for the implementation of sports wagering at authorized casinos and racetracks.

Emergency Regulations: The emergency regulations are posted at:

[www.nj.gov/oag/ge/sportsbetting.html](http://www.nj.gov/oag/ge/sportsbetting.html)

Follow the New Jersey Attorney General’s Office online at Twitter, Facebook, Instagram & YouTube. The social media links provided are for reference only. The New Jersey Attorney General’s Office does not endorse any non-governmental websites, companies or applications.

- **Original Press Release**: [https://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases18/pr20180613_er-1.html](https://nj.gov/oag/newsreleases18/pr20180613_er-1.html)

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**NEW MEXICO**

June 25, 2018

**SCAM ALERT: AG Balderas & Senator Heinrich Warn New Mexicans of Scammers Impersonating Elected Officials**

Albuquerque, NM – Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas issued a new Scam Alert urging consumers to beware of scammers impersonating elected officials, particularly in online messages. The alert is issued in response to a complaint received by the Attorney General from Senator Martin Heinrich. In this instance, a consumer received messages via Facebook Messenger that appeared to be sent by Senator Heinrich, soliciting consumer information, in exchange for a bogus grant, even though the senator had nothing to do with the texts. “The fact that an unknown person or entity sends you a text, makes a phone call to you or sends you an online message does not mean you should. “If you did not begin communicating with a person or business yourself, you have no way to know whether you have reached a real person or enterprise—let alone whether the services, grants or other products mentioned are worth having. Scammers and...

June 08, 2018

AG Balderas Warns New Mexicans of Security Threat after Massive Facebook Privacy Breach

Albuquerque, NM - Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas issued a consumer alert regarding the privacy of New Mexicans’ social media accounts.

“Yesterday, Facebook announced that due to a bug, as many as 14 million users had their privacy settings changed without their knowledge or consent,” said Balderas. “While no one should have their data disclosed to a company without their consent, the danger here goes deeper than that. Hackers and scammers use social media platforms to identify victims, and social media companies must be responsible for the protection of their users.”

Facebook’s latest privacy woes come on the heels of reports that it deliberately granted access to users’ information to cell phone makers and political research firms with ties to the Trump presidential campaign without those users’ knowledge or consent.

In March, Attorney General Balderas joined forty other state and territory attorneys general in sending a letter to Facebook demanding answers. Balderas urged...

➢ Original Press Release:

June 04, 2018

SCAM ALERT: AG Balderas Warns of Scammers Posing as IRS Agents and Threatening New Mexicans

Attorney General Hector Balderas is warning New Mexicans, as scam callers are targeting consumers with aggressive phone calls, posing as IRS agents. Those scam calls range from threats of monetary penalties for lack of tax payments, to threats of immediate arrest.

“No matter who calls threatening to represent the IRS, I’m urging New Mexicans not to send any money to these scammers,” Attorney General Hector Balderas said. “Inevitably, they are out to get unsuspecting people to send them money—for absolutely nothing. If the IRS believes you owe money, you will be notified in writing in the mail.”

The Office of Attorney General Hector Balderas offers advocates to help consumers who encounter scams, faulty products and broken promises. The Attorney General advises those who need help to fill out a consumer complaint form on his website at www.nmag.gov or to call 717-3500 in Albuquerque or 490-4060 in Santa Fe and toll-free statewide 1-...
NEW YORK

June 05, 2018

**Consumer Alert: A.G. Underwood Urges New Yorkers To Apply For Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program**

NEW YORK — Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today issued a consumer alert to federal student loan borrowers about a new temporary expansion of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (“PSLF”) Program. Under this PSLF expansion, borrowers who were turned down for PSLF Loan Forgiveness because some or all of their repayments were made through a non-qualifying repayment plan can now apply for reconsideration. For a limited time, the Department of Education will reconsider eligibility based on an expanded list of qualifying repayment plans.

“The PSLF Program rewards college graduates for pursuing careers in public service,” said Attorney General Underwood. “Unfortunately, some students were previously turned away from the program because they were mistakenly enrolled in the wrong payment plan. I encourage those New Yorkers to apply for reconsideration right away.”

This opportunity for reconsideration, which the Department of Education is referring to as “Temporary Expanded PSLF”, or “TEPSLF”, was made possible...


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June 05, 2018

**A.G. Underwood Announces Broad Support For Shield Act From Major Business And Consumer Groups**

NEW YORK—Attorney General Barbara D. Underwood today announced that several major business and consumer organizations have endorsed the Stop Hacks and Improve Electronic Data Security Act (SHIELD Act), S6933-A and A8884A, the Attorney General’s legislation to close major gaps in New York’s data security laws. Under the SHIELD Act, companies would have a legal responsibility to adopt “reasonable” administrative, technical, and physical safeguards for sensitive data; the bill also would expand the types of data that trigger reporting requirements. AARP, the Partnership for New York City, and Consumers Union have all expressed their strong support for the bill, and urged the New York State Legislature to pass it this year.

Attorney General Underwood also today released a Small Business Guide to Cybersecurity in New York State. The new publication offers tips to small business owners on how to protect sensitive data, and what to do in the event of a data...

NORTH DAKOTA
June 05, 2018
FAKE IRS SCAM CALL MADE TO GOVERNOR BURGUM
BISMARCK, ND – Scam artists left a recorded message for Governor Burgum yesterday evening. Scam artists use auto-dialers to place thousands of scam calls every day. The auto-dialer calls strings of numbers until an answering machine picks up, then it automatically leaves the prerecorded scam message. The scammers left a “Fake IRS” recorded message for Governor Burgum, threatening “immediate arrest” on supposed “federal warrants” unless the call was returned within “twenty-four working hours.” The Governor recognized the message as a “Fake IRS” scam call and his staff notified the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection division.
“Although the ‘fake IRS call’ scam has been around for several years and my office has issued many warnings, this scam is still finding victims in North Dakota,” said Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, who received the same scam message at home a few weeks ago. Earlier this year, a Bismarck man who responded to the call lost more...


OHIO
June 13, 2018
Attorney General DeWine Warns of Summer Scams
(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today warned consumers to beware of seasonal scams, including home improvement fraud and travel-related schemes.
“Scams don’t take a break in the summer,” Attorney General DeWine said. “We encourage people to be careful. Make sure you know who you’re dealing with. Ask for references. Take your time before making a decision.”
Last year, the Ohio Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Section logged more home improvement complaints in the summer (about 600 complaints) than in any other season. While some involved billing disputes, others alleged services were never provided. Consumers also reported travel-related complaints, such as “free” vacations that were not truly free and timeshare resellers who failed to deliver promised services. During summer months, consumers should beware of scams including: Storm-chaser scams. Following severe weather, some con artists travel to storm-damaged neighborhoods and offer to repair roofs or clear downed trees. They offer prompt work and take...

June 05, 2018

Attorney General DeWine Warns of Ticket Scams

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today warned consumers to beware of ticket scams when seeking tickets to the NBA Finals, summer concerts, and other in-demand events.

Consumers have reported suspected ticket scams involving a variety of events, including Cavs games and concerts, in complaints filed with the Ohio Attorney General's Office. The average reported loss is over $200.

“We want people to know that there are con artists out there,” Attorney General DeWine said. “If you’re trying to buy tickets on the secondary market from someone you don’t know, be careful. Some people will try to sell you tickets that don’t exist.”

The Attorney General’s Economic Crimes Unit has pursued several ticket-scam cases. In most instances, the perpetrator advertised tickets on Craigslist and collected payment from buyers, but then failed to provide any tickets or refunds.

Tips to avoid ticket scams include:

- Be skeptical of offers that are too good to…


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RHODE ISLAND

June 19, 2018

Attorney General Kilmartin Bill Increasing Penalties for Bad Contractors Passes General Assembly

In a major win for consumers who were left financially unwhole by bad or unlicensed contractors, the General Assembly today passed legislation (H7443/S2607) filed at the request of Attorney General Kilmartin that distinguishes penalties for licensed contractors convicted of failing to comply with final orders issued by the Contractors' Registration and License Board (CRLB) based on the amount of the monetary judgment included in the final order and imposes penalties for contractors operating without proper licenses or registration.

"The number one consumer complaint filed with our office is against contractors who do shoddy work, or worse, fail to do the work at all," said Attorney General Kilmartin. "Until now, our hands – and the hands of the CRLB – were tied because there was no legal avenue to hold these bad contractors accountable once the criminal sentence expired. This act gives our Office and the CRLB much needed tools to protect…

> **Original Press Release:** https://www.ri.gov/press/view/33503
AG Consumer Protection and SD Retailers Association Team Up to Host Data Breach Webinar

PIERRE, S.D. — The Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division and the South Dakota Retailers Association are hosting a Data Breach Webinar on Thursday, June 28, 2018, from 10-11 a.m. (CDT).

“The webinar will focus on South Dakota’s new data breach reporting law that will go in effect on July 1, 2018,” said Attorney General Jackley. “The webinar will cover the steps that both businesses and individuals must take if a data breach has occurred.”

The webinar is open to the public and both individuals and businesses are encouraged to take part. Sign up by clicking on the following link:

NOTE: This webinar will be recorded, and anyone who signs up will automatically receive a link to the recording.


June 05, 2018

Attorney General Jackley Warns of Grandparent Scam

PIERRE, S.D. — Attorney General Marty Jackley’s Consumer Protection Division is seeing the grandparent scam recirculate.

“As your Attorney General, I continue to make this plea to talk with friends, neighbors and coworkers to make sure they are checking on the seniors they know and care about to discuss this scam,” said Jackley. “This is a scam that continues to resurface about every six months so focusing on education and awareness is the key to making sure we do not continue to have victims.”

The scam begins with a telephone call from someone claiming to be a grandchild or other family member and requests money for a critical situation such as legal proceedings, theft of their personal belongings or medical conditions.

Consumers need to be aware that the scammers are getting better at targeting their victims by the use of the internet and social media - they are doing...

TEXAS

June 27, 2018
AG Paxton’s Office Participates in Fact-Finding Forum on Credit Card Skimmers
Attorney General Ken Paxton’s office today participated in a fact-finding forum to explore ways Texas can protect gas stations, banks and consumers against credit card skimming. Criminals use skimmers at gas station pumps to steal personal data from customers’ credit cards, resulting in more than $2 billion a year in fraudulent charges nationwide. A single compromised gas pump can capture data from 30 to 100 cards per day. Today’s forum in Austin focused on the scope of the problem in Texas, how law enforcement, gas stations and banks can fight back against skimmers, and laws to punish criminals who take advantage of unsuspecting victims. The program featured presentations by officials from the Texas comptroller’s office, Texas Department of Agriculture, attorney general’s office, and local and county law enforcement. Sergeant Adam Colby and Detective Jeff Roberts of the Tyler PD and North Texas Financial Crimes Task Force described how credit card skimmers first appeared...


VERMONT

June 22, 2018
Attorney General and Department of Public Service Announce Hearings on Protecting the Privacy of Vermonters
Attorney General T.J. Donovan, in consultation with the Department of Public Service, has announced the first of a series of meetings to consider legislative proposals to protect the privacy of Vermonters. The hearing will take place on Thursday, July 12, from 1:00 – 4:00 pm at 29 Church Street, 3rd Floor in Burlington, Vermont (best entrance for the public is located at 110 Cherry Street). Citizens, industry representatives, businesspeople, and members of academia are invited to attend and provide their insights. Topics under consideration will include, but not be limited to:
• Adoption of regulations concerning telecommunications privacy and whether to model such rules after the FCC’s 2016 Privacy Order, WC Docket No. 16-106, FCC 16-148, adopted Oct. 27, 2016. The request for this recommendation was made in [Act 66 of 2017].
• Whether Vermont should designate a Chief Privacy Officer, and what the responsibilities of that Officer would be. This request was...

June 20, 2018

FDA Considers Changes to Maple Labeling Guidance

More than 3,000 Vermonters and others wrote to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to express their views on a proposed “added sugar” guidance. The guidance would require maple and honey producers to declare “added sugar” content on their labels – even for 100% pure single-ingredient products like maple and honey. Today, the FDA disclosed it is considering changes to its guidance on the issue in light of public input. According to its “Constituent Updates:”

“FDA recognizes the complexity of this issue and is grateful for the feedback it has received, including more than 3,000 comments received during the comment period on the draft guidance that closed on June 15. The agency plans to take these comments into consideration to swiftly formulate a revised approach that makes key information available to consumers in a workable way...

The feedback that FDA has received is that the approach laid out in the draft guidance...


June 18, 2018

Attorney General Warns of Scam Using GoFundme

A new scam is targeting Vermont attorneys. The Attorney General’s Office warns that a fake “GoFundMe” campaign purports to raise money for a child with a rare disease using GoFundMe.com. According to the Vermont Bar Association, the phony campaign referenced its organization and requested that VBA members make contributions. GoFundMe.com is a popular online fundraising platform.

The VBA issued the following alert on its website:

“Recently, a Go Fund Me request entitled ‘Support Josh’ was sent with reference to the Vermont Bar Association, requesting that our membership support a member’s child with a rare disease, using our info@ email address. The link goes directly to PayPal. The Vermont Bar Association did not send this email. Please note that the VBA will never send a Go Fund Me request to its members. Our IT firm is looking into this matter. Please contact the office with any questions.”

The Vermont Bar Association may be reached...


June 06, 2018

“Landlord Restoration Program” Goes to Barre

ATTORNEY GENERAL’S OFFICE IN OUR COMMUNITY:

Last September, the Attorney General’s Office launched a year-long, community-focused
program to assist property owners who are landlords to comply with Vermont’s lead safety laws. The Landlord Restoration Program provides information and assistance to eligible property owners to restore rental properties with lead paint hazards. The Program focuses on Vermont towns with some of the highest rates of elevated blood levels in children. The Program runs from September 2017 through September 2018 and is now being offered to assist landlords in Barre. The Attorney General’s Office and Department of Health will host the following community meeting in Barre:

Tuesday, June 19, 2018 at 4:00pm
Aldrich Public Library, 6 Washington Street, Barre, VT 05641
For more information on the Landlord Restoration Program, visit:
https://www.uvm.edu/consumer/information-vermonts-lead-law-and-landlord-restoration-program
Learn more about lead and childhood lead poisoning at healthvermont.gov.


June 04, 2018
Donovan Calls On FDA To Amend Maple Guidance
Flanked by maple producers at a Vermont sugarbush in Richmond, Attorney General T.J. Donovan called on the federal government to amend its proposed guidance on a rule that would require maple and honey producers to declare “added sugar” content on their labels – even for 100% pure single-ingredient products like maple and honey. Donovan said single-ingredient producers should be exempt, or have other options, when the new rule takes effect. And, he unveiled a new webpage that allows Vermonters to comment on the proposed rule and guidance.

“Today, we’re calling on the FDA to listen to Vermonters,” said Donovan. “I support clear and transparent labeling, and I support common sense. That is why I stand with Vermont’s sugarmakers to ask the FDA to amend its guidance so that consumers are not led to believe that anything is added to their 100% pure Vermont maple or honey products.”

The Attorney General sent a...


VIRGINIA

June 15, 2018
FREE VETERANS LEGAL CLINIC TO BE HELD IN PETERSBURG IN JULY
PORTSMOUTH (June 15, 2018) – Attorney General Mark R. Herring announced today at the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Virginia Annual State Convention that the next pro
bono Veterans Legal Services Clinic will take place July 10 in Petersburg at the Petersburg Freedom Support Center, located at 32 West Washington Street, Petersburg, Virginia 23803.

During the daylong event, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) and the Virginia State Bar (VSB), volunteer attorneys from Attorney General Herring’s office and the VSB will serve low-income veterans by drafting important estate planning documents like wills, powers of attorney and advance medical directives. Representatives from DVS will also be present to answer questions regarding state and federal benefits that may be available to Virginia veterans including health benefits, disability benefits, financial services, education benefits, burial in a Virginia or United States veterans cemetery, and more.

Qualified veterans can sign...


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**WEST VIRGINIA**

June 28, 2018

**Attorney General Morrisey Urges Veterans to Exercise Caution with Pension Advances**

CHARLESTON — West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey urged military veterans to exercise caution when considering a pension advance.

A pension advance, like any cash advance, provides the consumer a lump sum of cash with the promise of future repayment. The pension advance model often exchanges upfront cash for high interest rates and a portion of, or all, future pension payments.

“Anyone can have difficulty making ends meet, especially retirees and others living on a fixed income,” Attorney General Morrisey said. “It is important that consumers facing such times consider all options to make the best use of their hard-earned dollars.”

Pension advance companies often target veterans and military retirees by using patriotic names or logos and may claim to be endorsed by the federal government. Consumers who are unsure should call their pension administrator to ensure a loan is consistent with the Department of Veterans Affairs regulations. ...

June 21, 2018

**Attorney General Morrisey Urges Consumers to Be Smart When Planning Summer Vacations**

CHARLESTON — West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey reminded consumers to protect their identity and finances when making travel arrangements.

Scammers know summer is a popular time for travel. They will actively watch for and take advantage of any consumer who appears to be rushed and unknowingly or inadvertently fails to take adequate precautions.

“It’s very important for consumers to make sure they are dealing with legitimate people or agencies when making their travel arrangements,” Attorney General Morrisey said. “They also must ask adequate questions and read the fine print because the last thing anyone wants is to have their rest and relaxation interrupted by the unexpected.”

Fortunately, there are several things consumers can do to ensure a stress-free vacation ....


June 07, 2018

**Attorney General Morrisey Urges Consumers To Shop Smart At Liquidation Sales**

CHARLESTON — West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey reminded consumers to shop smart when purchasing items from retailers that are going out of business.

Popular retail giants like Toys-R-Us, Elder-Beerman and Bon-Ton are among the latest to announce permanent store closures in recent months.

Such closings often spur liquidation sales that may appeal to bargain hunters, however, consumers should be aware of certain limitations and read any policies regarding the sale.

“When businesses advertise products at a fraction of the cost it grabs the attention of many potential customers,” Attorney General Morrisey said. “I urge consumers to enjoy the hunt for a bargain, but I also caution them to shop smart and carefully consider any purchase.”

Things to consider when shopping a liquidation sale include ....