

**STATE OF NEVADA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

*Protecting Citizens, Solving Problems, Making Government Work*

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**February 27, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Leslie Nielsen  
(702) 486-3102**

**ARREST SOUGHT FOR UNLICENSED MEDICAL PRACTICE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that a bench warrant has been issued for the arrest of Jerry K. Poulsen, age 57, who operated two diet clinics in Las Vegas. The warrant was issued by Clark County District Judge Joseph Bonaventure after Poulsen failed to appear for his arraignment on eleven felony counts of practicing medicine without a license and unlawful use of the title "M.D."

Poulsen was indicted earlier this month by the Clark County Grand Jury. The indictment, obtained by the Clark County District Attorney, alleges that Poulsen treated patients between December 1996 and June 1997 without having obtained a license from the Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners. Poulsen operated the Chrysalis Medical Weight Management and Wellness Centers at two locations: 2500 West Sahara Ave., Las Vegas, and, 501 South Rancho Dr., Las Vegas.

The State Board of Medical Examiners initially investigated Poulsen's operations at the West Sahara diet clinic which prompted the State Board of Pharmacy to seize controlled substances from the clinic early last year. The Attorney General's Office investigated further and submitted the case to the Clark County District Attorney for prosecution. If convicted, Poulsen could serve up to 44 years in jail and be fined up to \$55,000.

An indictment is merely an allegation, and Poulsen is to be considered innocent until and unless he is found guilty in a court of law.

Poulsen is described as a white male; 6 feet, 2 inches tall; 280 lbs.; dark brown/graying hair, possibly with a beard. Poulsen has a license to practice medicine in Utah, although a disciplinary case is pending there.

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**February 26, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**A.G. JOINS LETTER IN SUPPORT OF BULLETPROOF VEST  
PARTNERSHIP ACT**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa joined Attorneys General from 38 states today in sending a letter to the United States Senate urging them to pass the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Act of 1998 (S. 1605) which is currently before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The Bulletproof Vest Partnership Act would provide federal grant money to assist state, local and Indian tribal law enforcement agencies with purchases of body armor for their officers. The bill would authorize the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to issue matching grants to police agencies to pay for up to 50% of the costs of armored vests. In cases of fiscal hardship, the BJA would be further authorized to pay for up to 100% of the cost of the armor.

"The Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that over 30% of the 1,182 officers killed by firearms in the line of duty since 1980 could have been saved if they had been wearing body armor," Del Papa said. "Unfortunately, Department of Justice statistics estimate that approximately 25% of state, local and tribal law enforcement officers nationwide are not issued body armor. The Bulletproof Vest Partnership Act will help assure that all law enforcement agencies have the resources to provide their officers with this life-saving equipment."

Boulder City Police Chief David Mullin, also President of the Nevada Sheriffs and Chiefs Association, said he would definitely welcome federal assistance in the purchasing of protective vests. "These vests are real lifesavers. They not only help protect officers from attacks involving guns and knives, they have saved many officers from major injuries or death in traffic accidents," Mullin said. "Unfortunately, there is a real difficulty in meeting purchasing and replacement costs."

Nevada Highway Patrol Colonel Michael E. Hood stated that, "the NHP strongly endorses and encourages the use of body armor and has since 1979 when a routine traffic stop made by then Sergeant,

now Major Dan Hammack, quickly escalated to an exchange of gunfire. Hammack, who was not wearing armor, was shot in the abdomen during that exchange. I believe body armor would have saved Hammack from serious injury in this incident."

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**February 26, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Fred Schmidt  
(702) 687-6300**

**SOLAR POWER FUNDING AGREEMENT REACHED WITH  
NEVADA POWER**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection reached an agreement today with the Nevada Power Company, the Corporation for Solar Technology Resources and the staff of the Public Utilities Commission regarding renewable resource development, the "Green Power Option."

Nevada Power's "Green Power Option" is the state's first program to provide funding for solar power and other renewable resource development through optional payments on monthly electric power bills. The 1995 Legislature authorized this type of voluntary funding for renewable resource development.

If the agreement reached today is approved by the Public Utilities Commission, the "Green Power Option" will be available to electricity customers in southern Nevada by this summer. The proposed program allows customers to either round up their monthly power bill or add a flat rate of \$5, \$10 or \$20 to their monthly power bill to support Nevada Power Company's investment in renewable resources.

"Numerous polls have indicated that consumers support the development of clean, renewable electricity resources. But, consumers will only support programs like this if they can be assured that the money they contribute to these programs is actually spent to develop renewable energy," Del Papa said. "Under the agreement reached today customers can be assured that any additional payments they make to support solar power will be spent on developing and operating solar facilities."

Consumer protections included in today's agreement ensure that customers will have a separate notation on their monthly bill of the amount of their contribution. Customers who participate in the voluntary program will be informed quarterly how many residential and non-residential customers are contributing to the program, how much revenue has been received, what expenditures Nevada Power has made with the contributions and the amount of electrical generating capacity and energy produced by the

contributions.

Electric customers monthly electric service cannot be terminated for failure to pay the additional contribution and affirmative written authorization is required before any information about an individual customer's contribution can be disclosed to others.

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection would also continue to monitor Nevada Power's "Green Power Option" program to ensure that no significant portion of electric customers' contributions are spent on administrative and marketing expenses.

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**February 25, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Jan Murray  
(702) 486-3433**

**LAS VEGAN SENTENCED TO COMMUNITY SERVICE AND  
RESTITUTION FOR INSURANCE FRAUD**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that Dennis Wimett, age 30, of Las Vegas, was sentenced this morning in Clark County District Court on one gross misdemeanor count of attempted insurance fraud for making a false claim on stolen tires. Judge Joseph Pavlikowski sentenced Wimett to a one year suspended jail sentence and placed Wimett on probation for a term not to exceed two years. As a condition of probation, Wimett must perform 40 hours of community service and is required to reimburse \$1,722.78 to Metropolitan Insurance Company.

In 1993, Wimett reported to Metropolitan Insurance that four tires and Cramer wheels were stolen from his 1968 Mercury Cougar. After paying \$1,722.78 on the claim, Metropolitan received information that the claim was false. A cooperative investigation by the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the Investigative Division of the Attorney General's office revealed that Wimett had falsified purchase receipts and presented the bogus receipts to his insurance company for payment.

"Insurance fraud is a growing problem in Nevada," Del Papa said. "This case is just one example of the work of our newly enhanced Insurance Fraud Unit to bring those who fraudulently deal with insurance companies to justice. The citizens of this state pay the price of insurance fraud through the increased cost of obtaining and maintaining their insurance coverage."

The Insurance Fraud Unit of the Attorney General's Office has recently been enhanced and expanded to better meet the challenge of insurance fraud in Nevada. Made up of four prosecutors and five investigators, the Unit has more than 30 prosecutions filed and pending within the criminal system, six felony arrests since the first of the year, and a substantial number of ongoing investigations.

If you are aware of an insurance fraud, call the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Hotline at 1-800-266-8688.



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**February 19, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**TASK FORCE HOSTS HIGH TECHNOLOGY CRIME PREVENTION  
SEMINAR**

A seminar on High Technology Crime Awareness and Prevention will be held next week in Reno. The seminar is hosted by the Nevada High Technology Crime Task Force, the Attorney General's office and the Nevada Small Business Development Center in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

**HIGH TECHNOLOGY CRIME PREVENTION AND AWARENESS SEMINAR  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1998, 8:00 A.M. TO NOON  
SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY AUDITORIUM  
6100 NEIL ROAD, RENO  
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED AS SEATING IS LIMITED  
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT KATHY CARRICO AT 784-1717**

The seminar will feature leaders of the northern Nevada law enforcement community on the impact of high technology crime in Nevada, as well as, a panel of representatives from area businesses on the impact of high tech crime to the business community. The seminar will cover a wide range of topics including computer intrusion, embezzlement, equipment theft, telecommunication and internal security. Small business owners, public officials, finance executives, security personnel, computer information specialists and anyone else concerned with high technology crime prevention are encouraged to attend.

"The participation of Nevada's business community is vital in helping to fight high technology crime in our state," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "Together, we can coordinate and share our resources to better fight the criminal elements in this new age of cybercrime."

Similar seminars are planned for southern Nevada in the near future. The Nevada High Technology Crime Task Force will discuss the impact of high technology crime with business leaders in Las Vegas



on March 19, 1998.

For further questions, please contact Kathy Carrico at the Nevada Small Business Development Center at: (702) 784-1717.

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**February 19, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**L & H EMBEZZLER ENTERS GUILTY PLEA**

Former L & H Administrators' employee Mary Ferris pled guilty today in U.S. District Court in Las Vegas to ten counts of health care fraud and one count of health care embezzlement for her actions in defrauding the State of Nevada's employee health care benefit program out of approximately \$608,000. The FBI apprehended Ferris last December following an investigation in which they were assisted by the Attorney General's Investigation Division. Ferris is scheduled to be sentenced on May 29, 1998 at 8:30 a. m.

"The Attorney General's Office is already in the process of pressing for recovery of as much of the missing funds as possible through L & H's insurers," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "Ferris' sentencing is the necessary trigger for the Committee on Benefits to take the next step in the process of recovering \$477,000 of the missing funds seized by the FBI."

Last October, the Attorney General's Office also filed a civil complaint against Ferris to aid in the Committee on Benefits' recovery of missing funds. A second civil complaint was filed against L & H owner Frank Rousseau and various L & H corporate entities. The second complaint alleges negligence, breach of fiduciary duty, breach of contract, and breach of implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing.

L & H administered the State Committee on Benefits' employee health care coverage until July, 1997. When L & H's contract was terminated, they left behind a backlog of approximately 75,000 unprocessed claims. The Committee on Benefits' new administrator, UICI, indicates they will attempt to have the backlog cleared up by the end of March.

At this time, the Attorney General's office is also drafting legislation to give the Committee on Benefits the necessary tools to help prevent similar problems in the future.

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**February 18, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: John Albrecht  
(702) 687-5024**

**LYON COUNTY JOINS YOUTH TOBACCO INITIATIVE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that the Lyon County Sheriff's Department has signed an agreement with the Attorney General's office to conduct undercover inspections of retail stores to determine if tobacco products are being sold to underage youth.

In 1995, the state legislature assigned to the Attorney General's office the responsibility of conducting inspections of tobacco retailers to enforce compliance with Nevada law prohibiting the sale of tobacco to children. Since then, over 5,000 inspections have been conducted by various local law enforcement and private agencies under the direction of the Attorney General. In 1994, the youth tobacco buy rate was 64%. In July of 1997, a survey conducted by the Attorney General's office in conjunction with Doctors and Lawyers for a Drug Free Youth showed the tobacco buy rate in Nevada was down to 19.8%.

"Lyon County looks forward to joining the Attorney General and other entities who have been involved in these worthwhile efforts to help keep tobacco from underage youth," Lyon County Sheriff Sid Smith said. "We need to do what we can to discourage our children from smoking."

"The participation of Lyon County will help us in our goal to reach the greatest possible number of retailers," Del Papa said. "Reducing youth access to tobacco products in Lyon County will help make a difference in improving the overall health of Nevada's children."

In addition to the inspections, the Attorney General's office has launched a community awareness campaign along with public health groups, schools and others which includes the training of retail sales staff on when and how to ask for age identification.

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**February 17, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**DEL PAPA AWARD RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING SENIOR  
CITIZENS**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will present recognition awards to outstanding senior citizens from throughout Nevada during a luncheon this Friday at John Ascuaga's Nugget. One senior from every county in the state (3 from Clark County and 2 from Washoe County) will receive the Frankie Sue Del Papa Silver State Senior Volunteer Award during the Aging Awareness Luncheon sponsored by the Elvirita Lewis Forum and the Nevada Division for Aging Services.

**AGING AWARENESS LUNCHEON  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1998  
12 NOON  
CELEBRITY SHOWROOM, JOHN ASCUAGA'S NUGGET, SPARKS**

"Our state's senior community is one of Nevada's fastest growing populations and one of its greatest assets," Del Papa said. "Older residents who have taken the time to volunteer their services to the community make an invaluable contribution to our quality of life. Educational institutions, social service agencies, and a variety of community based organizations benefit from the time and experience given by senior volunteers. Indeed, we all benefit from their important contributions."

"The Aging Awareness Luncheon is an important opportunity for us to recognize those seniors who we feel are leading the way towards making a difference to improve our communities. I am excited to be a part of this statewide celebration of the contributions made by Nevada's senior population," Del Papa said.

If you need further information on this event, please contact The Elvirita Lewis Forum in Sparks at: (702) 358-2768.

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**February 17, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Jo Ann Gibbs  
(702) 486-3129**

**NEVADA CONSUMERS TO RECEIVE RESTITUTION FOR  
IMPROPER DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES BY FEDERATED  
DEPARTMENT STORES**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Nevada consumers who were victims of improper debt collection practices by Federated Department Stores, Inc. will receive restitution as part of a multi-state settlement with Federated. Nevada is one of 20 states who took part in the settlement which resulted from a nationwide investigation into Federated's debt collection practices involving consumers who had filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

Federated owns the Bon Marche, Bloomingdales, Burdines, Lazarus, Rich's, Goldsmith, Macy's East, Macy's West and Stern's Department stores.

The investigation confirmed that Federated violated State Consumer Protection Law by pressuring those consumers into signing a reaffirmation agreement. A reaffirmation agreement is a written contract under which a Chapter 7 debtor agrees to repay a debt that otherwise would be discharged in bankruptcy. These agreements are supposed to be voluntary.

"According to the investigation, these customers signed the agreements because Federated led them to believe that they still had to pay back their debts in order to save their goods from repossession," Del Papa said.

Federated also violated the U.S. Bankruptcy code by failing to file those agreements with the Bankruptcy Court. This practice has been going on for at least the last five years.

"Approximately \$32,600 in restitution will go to 62 customers in Nevada," Del Papa said. "The state will also receive approximately \$11,500 for the general fund as a result of this settlement."

"Federated cooperated fully in the investigation, and, beginning last summer, took steps voluntarily to identify and credit the accounts of customers from whom debts were collected improperly," Del Papa said.

Nationwide, Federated has already paid approximately \$4 million in reimbursements to about 10,000 customers. As a result of today's multi-state agreement, an additional \$2 million in reimbursements is provided to approximately 3,500 eligible debtors. Federated further agreed to make payments totalling \$2.5 million to the states and contribute \$240,000 to a special consumer education fund for use by the states.

Affected customers identified by Federated or through the claims process will have all their reaffirmed debt stricken and Federated will waive any rights to repossess the merchandise. Affected customers will also be reimbursed or receive credit for finance charges and penalties charged by Federated, be reimbursed or receive credit for any payment on the reaffirmed debt plus 10% interest, and, be eligible to receive a pro rata payment based upon the amount of payments they made on an unlawful debt.

Other states participating in this agreement include: Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee and Washington.

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**February 6, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Chris Van Dyck  
(702) 687-6300**

**A.G.'S CONSUMER BUREAU SEEKS SLASH IN WATER RATE  
REQUEST FINAL PHASE OF HEARINGS BEGIN MONDAY**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that, during a hearing which will begin on Monday, the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection will ask the Public Utilities Commission to dramatically slash the \$13.7 million water rate hike sought by Westpac Utilities, the water division of Sierra Pacific Power Company.

THE NEXT PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION HEARING ON SIERRA PACIFIC'S WATER RATE REQUEST IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AT 8:00 A.M. ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1998 IN HEARING ROOM "A" OF THE CARSON CITY OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION LOCATED AT 727 FAIRVIEW DR.

"The Utility Consumer Advocate of the Bureau of Consumer Protection recently completed a comprehensive investigation of Sierra Pacific's case and has concluded that the vast majority of the company's request is without merit," Del Papa said. "The Consumer Advocate is recommending that Sierra Pacific only be allowed to raise its rates by about 4%, or, roughly \$2 million."

Sierra Pacific claims that the vast majority of its request stems from new plant additions, namely facilities like the now finished Chalk Bluff Treatment Plant which cost approximately \$92 million and is needed to comply with federal safe drinking water requirements. Although Sierra Pacific has added several new facilities over the last few years, the Consumer Advocate contends that the company cannot justify recovery of anywhere near the full \$13.7 million for the following reasons:

First, a big part of the rate increase has nothing to do with the actual "in the ground" cost of these facilities but rather is related to Sierra Pacific's request to increase its rate of profit from those new facilities. "Chalk Bluff is expensive enough. There is simply no justification for allowing Sierra Pacific to raise its profit margin," Consumer Advocate attorney Chris Van Dyck said.

Second, some of the new facilities for which Sierra Pacific is seeking recovery are not currently being used. Customers should not be required to pay for facilities which are not complete or which are not in service.

Third, Sierra Pacific is seeking to increase its depreciation expense by \$1.8 million annually. "Again, this part of the request has nothing to do with the out-of-pocket cost of the new plant, but, if approved, would allow Sierra Pacific to collect \$1.8 million additional revenues without any cash outlay," Van Dyck said.

Fourth, the Consumer Advocate's investigation revealed a number of areas where Sierra Pacific should have tightened its belt such as certain expenses related to pension funding, costs related to the flood of 1997 and the failed merger attempt between Sierra and Washington Water Power.

The Public Utilities Commission has held a series of hearings on Sierra Pacific's rate increase request including a consumer session in Reno during January which was attended by approximately 180 customers. The Commission is expected to make a final decision on the rate increase request sometime in March, 1998.



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**February 5, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will be participating in a joint meeting of the Conference of Western Attorneys General (CWAG) and Canadian Attorneys General in Vancouver, British Columbia, from Friday, February 6, 1998 through Monday, February 9, 1998.

"This is an opportunity for Attorneys General from the Western States and Canada to get together and discuss current developments on issues that are important to our states and provinces," Del Papa said. "I look forward to providing an update on the activities of Nevada's High Technology Crime Task Force as well as our efforts to prepare for changes in the telecommunications industry and cooperative efforts to help fight telemarketing fraud."

Other issues expected to be discussed during the meeting include cross-border drug smuggling and tobacco litigation.

CWAG is a multi-state organization comprised of the 15 Western States and the Island territories of Guam, American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands. CWAG works to enhance communication and cooperation among its members in areas of particular interest to the West.

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February 4, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Jan Murray**  
**(702) 486-3433**

**LAS VEGAN FINED FOR CONCEALING EVIDENCE OF  
INSURANCE**

**FRAUD**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that Victor Rodriguez, age 44 of Las Vegas, pleaded guilty today to one gross misdemeanor count of concealing evidence of insurance fraud. Rodriguez was sentenced to pay a \$500 fine by Clark County District Court Judge Joseph Bonaventure.

Rodriguez filed a claim with his insurance company for a stolen bicycle valued at \$3,500. Records showed that Rodriguez had already submitted a previous claim for the stolen bicycle to a different insurance company.

"Even though Rodriguez was denied payment from the second insurance company, this sentencing is important because it reaffirms the message that insurance fraud is a serious and costly crime which will not be tolerated," Del Papa said. "Ultimately, the cost of insurance fraud is passed on to the consumer through higher insurance rates."

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**February 3, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Dave Sarnowski  
(702) 687-3536**

**NEVADA JOINS BRIEF TO U.S. SUPREME COURT REGARDING  
FEDERAL APPEALS PROCESS**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that the State of Nevada has joined with 23 other states in a legal brief on a case before the United States Supreme Court that could affect the federal appeals process. In the case of *Hohn v. United States*, the question is whether the U.S. Supreme Court should allow further appeals in light of the fact that a federal district court and a federal circuit court have both decided that a prisoner's case does not present any meritorious legal issues for consideration.

The case of *Hohn v. United States* involves the lower courts' refusal to issue a certificate of appealability. The certificate of appealability is an important procedural requirement enacted by Congress to streamline federal postconviction review by eliminating frivolous appeals of denials of habeas corpus petitions by state and federal prisoners. In *Hohn*, which involves a federal prisoner, the states argue that the denial of a certificate of appealability, in the lower federal courts, should effectively conclude the habeas petition.

"Bringing the litigation to a close at this point is consistent with Congressional intent behind the certificate requirement itself as well as behind the recent habeas reforms contained in the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996," according to the states' argument. "Conversely, if the denial of a certificate of appealability may be reviewed by this (the U.S. Supreme) Court on certiorari (appeal), a new layer of litigation will be added to the federal review process."

"The possibility of an expansion in the federal review process of state convictions affects the finality of state convictions and the States' sovereign right to enforce criminal laws," Del Papa said. "Furthermore, the addition of a new layer of federal litigation will require States to allocate more scarce resources to the defense of convictions which should be presumed to be final."

The Nevada Attorney General's Office routinely litigates hundreds of capital and non-capital federal

habeas corpus cases which could be impacted by the Court's decision.

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**January 29, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: John Albrecht  
(702) 687-7332**

**YOUTH TOBACCO SALE TEST DISTRIBUTED**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that brochures containing tests regarding Nevada law governing the sale of tobacco were mailed to convenience and grocery stores across Nevada this week. Over 38,000 brochures were mailed out to the stores for distribution to sales clerks. The clerk may complete the test and return it to the Attorney General's office which will correct the tests and advise store managers and owners how their staff performed.

Nevada is the first and only state to implement such a test which reviews the clerk's knowledge of topics such as: what are valid forms of identification, what are tobacco products, and what are the penalties for sale to an underage youth.

"This mailing will serve to provide refresher information as well as help to evaluate the effectiveness of earlier training and public education programs conducted by the retail industry and the Attorney General's office," Del Papa said. "Store managers will be told of the average test score of sales staff from their stores and can decide if their clerks need more training."

Peter Krueger, State Executive of the Nevada Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association said, "This questionnaire provides employers with a method to gauge the understanding and level of knowledge that their employees have regarding the sale of tobacco products in Nevada. The survey will also let employers determine the effectiveness of their in-house tobacco training programs."

Since 1995, the Nevada Attorney General has been responsible for enforcing the state law which prohibits the sale of tobacco to children under 18. Over 5,000 "stings" have been conducted and the youth buy rate has been reduced from 63 % in 1994 to 19.8 % in a study conducted in July, 1997.

Additionally, a 1997 survey of Nevada's high school students, conducted by the Nevada Department of Education, showed a reduction in tobacco use by underage youth since 1995. Specifically, the survey showed the following:

- The percentage of students who bought cigarettes in a store and were NOT asked for proof of age dropped from 63% in 1995 to 41% in 1997.
- Among students who smoke, the percentage who bought their own cigarettes in a store dropped from 34 % in 1995 to 22% in 1997.
- Regular smoking among high school students has decreased by 6 %.
- Use of chewing tobacco by males fell 11% from 1995 to 1997.

For further information on retail education programs aimed at preventing tobacco sales to underage youth in Nevada, contact Senior Deputy Attorney General John Albrecht at (702) 687-5024 or Peter Krueger of the Nevada Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association at (702) 348-1888.

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**January 29, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: David Sarnowski  
(702) 687-3536**

**NINTH CIRCUIT UPHOLDS NEVADA CRIMINAL PROCEDURE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit issued a critical ruling favorable to Nevada in criminal cases undergoing habeas corpus review in the federal courts. In the case of *Ramirez v. Hatcher*, the constitutionality of Nevada's reasonable doubt jury instructions, which was statutorily mandated from 1967-1991, was upheld by a three judge panel.

In 1991, the jury instruction was amended by the Nevada State Legislature following a ruling in a United States Supreme Court case in which a Louisiana jury instruction defining reasonable doubt was overturned. Since that time, many criminal defendants have contended that they should be given new trials claiming Nevada's reasonable doubt instruction is similarly unconstitutional.

The Ninth Circuit's ruling came in the case of Miguel Ramirez, who was convicted by a Clark County jury in 1987 on charges of kidnapping, sexual assault and conspiracy to commit sexual assault. The three judge panel, through the majority Circuit Judges Cynthia Holcomb Hall and David Thompson, upheld the constitutionality of Nevada's reasonable doubt jury instruction. A third jurist, Circuit Judge Stephen Reinhardt, dissented from the majority ruling. In a separate, unpublished decision, the entire three judge panel rejected other claims by Ramirez, including those that attacked the performance of his attorney and the prosecutor in the case, as well as assertions that the victim's testimony was insufficient evidence upon which to establish guilt.

"This ruling is critical to Nevada in several respects," Del Papa said. "First, the court has upheld the conviction in this particular case, thereby preventing a violent criminal from obtaining a new trial more than a decade after the conviction. Second, we have dozens of cases pending in federal habeas review, including several capital cases, in which this precedent now applies in the State's favor. The state's prosecutors won't have to spend so much time constantly litigating the same issue. Third, the possibility

of having to retry every case between 1967 and 1991 based on the jury instruction issue is eliminated. This will help us to focus our prosecutorial efforts on more current cases."

The Ninth Circuit's ruling is a binding legal precedent on the federal district courts and may not be superseded by another three judge panel's decision. This decision can only be reviewed by an 11 judge panel of the Ninth Circuit or by the United States Supreme Court.



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**January 27, 1998  
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CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**DEL PAPA TO PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL HEARING ON  
ELECTRIC DEREGULATION**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will participate in a national hearing on Electric Utility Deregulation on Thursday, January 29, 1998. Academic experts, industry and consumer representatives, regulators, and other interested parties will present testimony to Attorneys General from nine western states. Among those scheduled to testify is Fred Schmidt, Chief of the Nevada Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection.

"Just as consumers are learning to avoid the often deceptive and fraudulent practices used to get them to switch long distance telephone providers, the impending deregulation of electric power may trigger an even greater wave of abuses," Del Papa said.

During the next two years, as Nevada moves toward competition, it is important that customers are able to make informed choices. "Given the long distance telecommunications experience, significant public education is necessary for new competitive markets to work," Del Papa said. "As happened with telephone service, scam artists most likely will try to take advantage of the public's unfamiliarity with a newly deregulated industry. Scam artists may find new ways, and even some time-tested ones, to dupe unsuspecting consumers. One good way consumers can protect themselves is to stay alert."

"Telecommunications competition has taught us the importance of having consumer protection resources available to help face the important consumer issues that are now moving to the front burner. Our office, as well as Attorneys General nationwide, are committed to working together to help to prevent activities such as slamming, false advertising, telemarketing gimmicks and other potential unfair business practices," Del Papa said. Standard terms for price evaluation and comparison of resources, including energy efficient and renewable resources, should also be adopted.

Because electricity is a basic necessity of life, redlining and other forms of discrimination must be prevented. Providers must not be allowed to refuse service to certain categories of customers so that customers will always have a provider of last resort who has an obligation to serve. Aggregation of customer groups must also be allowed for and encouraged as marketers will most likely not seek individual small customers if transaction costs are high.

Additionally, since competition should result in price options and/or reduction for customers, rate freezes, caps or reductions should be in place, at least in the short term, so that no class of customer is worse off as a result of deregulation. The Office of the Consumer Advocate has already negotiated a cap on Sierra Pacific's electric rates until the year 2000.

"Nevada has already made substantial progress in preparing for utility deregulation," Del Papa said. "Last October, with the approval of the state legislature, we consolidated the Attorney General's consumer protection, antitrust and utility consumer advocacy units into one Bureau of Consumer Protection. The 1997 legislature also passed Assembly Bill 366 which provides an initial framework for guiding electric utility deregulation." Nevada is one of ten states that have already passed legislation related to retail electric utility competition.

"Hopefully, a strong competitive market will save money for both consumers and business. Our job is to help facilitate that. However, we want to keep a watchful eye out so that our citizens are both informed and have their collective interests protected as much as possible," Del Papa said.

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**January 26, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Dorothy Nash Holmes  
(702) 687-3533**

**ATTORNEY PLEADS NO CONTEST TO MISDEMEANOR  
POSSESSION CHARGE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that Minden attorney Colin Patrick Gilbert plead no contest today to a misdemeanor charge of "possession of a drug which may not be introduced into interstate commerce," a violation of NRS 454.351. Justice of the Peace John W. Ray handed down a deferred sentence conditioned upon Gilbert's completion of a drug education and treatment program within one year.

Gilbert was arrested October 10, 1997 at the Northern Nevada Correctional Center in Carson City where he had gone to visit a client. During a routine search, made of all visitors prior to visitation, officers found a baggie containing a very small amount of marijuana in Gilbert's coat pocket. Lab analysis revealed the total quantity of marijuana to be .5 grams, less than the amount normally found in a single cigarette.

While the quantity in this case is quite small, and there was no evidence that Gilbert was selling to inmates or trafficking in larger amounts of marijuana, the Attorney General's Office prosecuted this case because the possession took place at the state prison by one who is an officer of the courts. Gilbert's law firm is hired by Douglas County as an independent contractor to provide criminal defense services to those who cannot afford lawyers.

The Attorney General has no role in deciding if Gilbert will be continued in his contract with Douglas County. That decision will be made by the Douglas County Commission on recommendation of the District Court judges.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Brooke Nielsen**

**January 2, 1998**

**(702) 687-3511**

**A.G. INVESTIGATION OF LAS VEGAS CONSTABLE COMPLETED**

The Office of the Attorney General announced today that, following a thorough investigation and review by two deputy attorneys general, it has been determined that there is insufficient evidence of wrongdoing by Constable Bob Nolen and Chief Deputy Constable Douglas Tharp to support pursuing criminal charges.

The Attorney General's Office conducted their investigation following the conclusion of an investigation by the Clark County District Attorney and an audit of the Constable's office which reached the conclusion that there was insufficient evidence to support allegations of false mileage claims. The Clark County District Attorney requested the Attorney General's Office review this matter after questions of a potential conflict of interest arose.

Due to lack of internal controls and insufficient documentation at the Constable's office regarding the mileage claims during the time period in question, there is no way to prove or disprove whether any of the deputies submitted erroneous claims. However, the Clark County District Attorney's Office has said that procedural changes in the Constable's office have been implemented so that mileage claims may now be verified.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: John Albrecht**

**January 2, 1998**

**(702) 687-7332**

**A.G.'S TOBACCO COORDINATOR TO ADDRESS NATIONAL  
WORKSHOP**

John Albrecht, Senior Deputy Attorney General with the Nevada Attorney General's office, will speak at a national workshop on reducing youth purchases of tobacco. The workshop be held in Washington D.C. on January 12-13, 1998.

The third National Synar Technical Assistance Workshop is sponsored by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and will be attended by about 250 youth tobacco control officials from all of the states and territories. "Synar" refers to the federal law which requires states to adopt and enforce laws which prohibit the sale of tobacco to children under 18 as a condition of receiving federal substance abuse grants.

Nevada is one of only four states which has already achieved a youth buy rate of less than 20 %. The federal government required states to reach this goal no later than the year 2002. Albrecht has coordinated Nevada's youth tobacco enforcement activities since 1995.

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**March 26, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**DEL PAPA TO SERVE ON NATIONAL TEEN PREGNANCY  
PREVENTION TASK FORCE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa has been asked to serve on a Task Force for the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. The purpose of the national Task Force is to help stimulate a wide variety of actions at the national, state and local levels to help all teenagers achieve a pregnancy-free adolescence. The Campaign's goal is to reduce the national teen pregnancy rate by one third by the year 2005.

The National Campaign was established in 1996 as an independent nonprofit initiative and is funded in part by three major foundations: The Carnegie Corporation of New York; the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; and an anonymous private foundation.

"The consequences of teenage pregnancy are serious. The public is deeply concerned about how our families function and sees teenage pregnancy as part of a challenge that our communities face," Del Papa said. "Nationwide the teenage pregnancy rate has increased over the last two decades. More than 40 percent of young women in the United States become pregnant before they reach age 20."

To help meet their goal, the Campaign will undertake specific tasks which include taking a clear stand against teenage pregnancy and attracting the interest of more national leaders and organizations on this issue; enlisting the help of the media to reduce teenage pregnancy; stimulating and supporting state and local action to reduce teen pregnancy; and strengthening the knowledge base for effective programming at the community level.

Del Papa was asked to be a part of the national Task Force, in part, because of her efforts toward reducing the teen pregnancy rate in Nevada.

In 1995, Del Papa's office worked with the State Health Division on an Action Plan responding to

Nevada's teen pregnancy rate which was one of the highest in the nation. Data released by the Health Division last year indicates progress is being made toward the goal of reducing pregnancies among girls age 15-17 to no more than 50 per 1,000 girls by the year 2000. In 1994, Nevada's teen pregnancy rate for 15-17 year old girls was 63.2 per 1,000.

As part of Nevada's Action Plan to reduce teenage pregnancy, more than 30 Community Action Teams have been formed. Each Team is looking for strategies and programs to combat teenage pregnancy in their community. Nevada is unique in trying to find specific strategies that will work in individual communities.

"This is an issue of great public concern as the consequences of teenage pregnancy and child-bearing contribute to many of the nation's enduring social problems," Del Papa said. "Although there are differences of opinion as to how to approach reducing the teenage pregnancy rate in our country, the National Campaign will seek more constructive dialogue on the part of the public as well as finding more effective ways of working with teenagers to help them understand the importance of delaying pregnancy and childbearing until they are truly ready for parenthood."

Attorney General Del Papa would also like to remind Nevadans that May is National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month. During this month efforts are stepped up to raise public awareness as to the challenge facing Nevada and the nation in reducing the teen pregnancy rate.

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**March 23, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**REVISED GUIDE FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AVAILABLE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that recently updated editions of the Attorney General's "Guide for Nonprofit Organizations" are now available.

"Board members of nonprofit organizations volunteer their time and talent to improving the quality of life for citizens of the State of Nevada and elsewhere," Del Papa said. "At the same time, they are assuming legal responsibility for the operation of their organization. This guide is intended to assist board members in understanding their rights and duties. It also contains recommendations to help them more effectively carry out their stewardship."

To obtain a copy of the guide, contact the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection in Reno at (702) 688-1818, in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3786, or you may contact Bob Harmon in Carson City at (702) 687-3512.

Copies of the Guide will also be available at the Secretary of State's office in Carson City.

In addition, copies of the Guide are being distributed to United Way offices in the north and south. In Reno, contact the Nonprofit Center of the United Way at (702) 333-8281, they are located at 811 Ryland St., Reno. In Las Vegas, contact the United Way offices at (702) 734-2273, they are located at 1660 East Flamingo in Las Vegas.



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**March 13, 1998  
Contact: ELEANOR MINSKY  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
(702) 688-1959**

**A. G. AUTO STING LEADS TO RESTITUTION AND FINE FROM  
GARDNERVILLE AUTO BODY SHOP**

Carson City - Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Superior Collision Center, Inc. of Gardnerville has signed an Assurance of Discontinuance agreement with the state Consumer Affairs Division. The business agrees to repay an insurance company \$207 for a wheel replacement which was not performed.

Superior will also pay the state a \$2,500 administrative fine.

The body shop was netted in an undercover sting operation by the Attorney General's office, in cooperation with the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). Investigators from the Attorney General's office posed as private parties needing repairs to a 1992 Dodge on loan from the NICB. Superior was caught when it submitted a false claim for payment to what they thought was the investigators' auto insurance company, which was also participating in the undercover operation.

As part of the Assurance of Discontinuance, Superior has agreed to surrender for inspection, upon request of the Commissioner of Consumer Affairs, all records and documentation relating to its auto body repairs for the next two years and to obey all provisions of the Nevada Deceptive Trade Practices Act.

Persons suspecting that they have been the victim of fraud in the repair of a motor vehicle should contact the Consumer Affairs Division of the Department of Business and Industry at 486-7353 in Las Vegas or 688-1800 in Reno.

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**March 12, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**DEL PAPA RESOLUTIONS ON YOUTH AND TOBACCO/HIGH  
TECH CRIME ADOPTED BY ATTORNEYS GENERAL NATIONALLY**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that the National Association of Attorneys General has adopted four resolutions proposed by the Nevada Attorney General's office.

Three resolutions were on the issue of children and tobacco. One calls upon amateur athletes to participate in voluntary efforts to reduce use of tobacco by underage youth. A second calls upon the motion picture industry to set the same example. The third asks national and state high school rodeo associations to discourage the use of tobacco products by children under age 18.

"By adopting these resolutions, Attorneys General nationally are showing their support for our ongoing public awareness efforts which focus on reducing youth smoking," Del Papa said this morning, from the meeting in Washington. "One million children begin to smoke in this country every year. Anything we can do to reduce those numbers is important. It's one thing for adults to make the decision to begin smoking, however, I believe that children are not prepared to make such a serious decision that could have life long consequences."

The youth and tobacco resolutions were adopted during a morning session of the spring meeting of the National Association of Attorneys General in Washington D.C. Youth smoking is expected to be one of the topics discussed by President Clinton, who is scheduled to address the Attorneys General today.

The Attorneys General also adopted a fourth resolution proposed by Nevada's Attorney General. This resolution concerns the issue of high technology crime and the need to better organize on a national level to fight the unlawful use of high technology.

Copies of the four resolutions accompany this release.

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**March 12, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**DEL PAPA JOINS NATIONAL RESOLUTION AGAINST DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa, who chairs the Nevada Domestic Violence Prevention Council, today made another important step in her continuing efforts to combat domestic violence in our state. Del Papa joined other Attorneys General in a national resolution targeting violence against women. The resolution promotes strong measures to aid in the prevention of domestic violence in Nevada and nationwide.

"Department of Justice statistics estimate that each year in this country, more than 1,000 women, almost three a day, die at the hands of a husband, boyfriend or other 'intimate.' More than three million children are at risk of witnessing domestic violence in their homes. And, half the men who abuse their female partners also will abuse their children," Del Papa said. "We also know that children who witness domestic violence in their homes often grow up to abuse their own family or become victims themselves."

Del Papa announced her support for the Attorneys General's resolution during the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) Spring meeting in Washington D.C. Among the steps called for in the resolution are the need to better coordinate the enforcement of protective orders across state lines; establish victim-counselor confidentiality to assist women who are seeking help to get out of a domestic violence situation; and, penalty enhancement for men who batter women in front of children.

The NAAG resolution also calls on Congress to act this spring to extend and fully fund the Violence Against Women Act which, among its provisions, created grants for local domestic violence prevention efforts.

"We recently learned that Nevada will receive an additional \$1.145 million in grants from the Violence Against Women Program. These funds assist in the coordination of statewide law enforcement and

prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women. Funds are also awarded to assist in developing and enhancing governmental and private victim service programs that aid such victims," Del Papa said. "As part of this resolution, we are also asking for more flexibility on the state level to use Violence Against Women Act grants to help programs that work with the children of victims."

Del Papa and the other Attorneys General also resolved to work with the public health community, law enforcement, educators and others within the community to focus attention on children who witness violence. They also planned for a national meeting, sometime in the near future, highlighting initiatives to help children who witness violence.

"The horror of domestic violence touches us all. Statistics show that more than 36,000 incidents related to domestic violence are reported in Nevada in a year's time. These women are daughters, mothers, sisters and neighbors," Del Papa said. "Each of us needs to do what we can to help break the cycle of violence in our state."

For more information on how to help with efforts to end Domestic Violence, call Nevada's toll free domestic violence information and referral line at 1-800-230-1955. If you are being abused, or know someone who is, call Nevada's Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-500-1556, 24 hours a day, to get help.

## **SATELLITE FEED**

Attorney General Del Papa will participate in a satellite feed today from Washington D.C. on this new national domestic violence prevention resolution.

TIME: 10:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M., THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 1998.

COORDINATES: TELESTAR 5, TRANSPONDER 15, DOWNLINK 4000, AUDIO 6.2, 6.8.

For further information, please contact Bob Harmon in Carson City at (702) 687-3512.

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**March 11, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Creig Skau  
(702) 687-3532**

**JURY REJECTS INMATE LAWSUIT**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that on Tuesday, March 10, 1998, a federal district court jury in Reno ruled in favor of two employees of the Nevada Department of Prisons who had been sued by an inmate of the Ely State Prison.

Inmate Manuel Winn had filed the suit against Correctional Officer Trainee Kevin Ingram and Senior Correctional Officer Lawrence Rodriguez for personal injuries suffered by inmate Winn during an incident at the prison in February of 1993. Inmate Winn claimed excessive force was used by the correctional officers in breaking up a prison fight on February 23, 1993. The jury determined that the correctional officers had acted properly to stop the violence.

According to Creig Skau of the Attorney General's office, who represented the state's correctional officers in this case, the incident began when inmate Winn assaulted a fellow inmate named Thomas Wright. Correctional Officer Trainee Ingram issued a verbal warning for inmate Winn to stop and lie down after which officer Ingram fired a blank round from his shotgun. When the inmates continued to fight, officer Ingram followed his training and procedure by issuing another verbal warning then "skipping" a live round of birdshot into the aggressor, inmate Winn. Inmate Winn continued to fight so officer Ingram "skipped" a second round. Inmate Winn then laid down as ordered. In the course of the incident, inmate Winn was struck by multiple pellets.

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**March 11, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**DEL PAPA JOINS LETTER ASKING FOR KILLER'S EXTRADITION**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa joined Attorneys General from 43 other states in signing a letter that was sent to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright today. The letter urges Albright to "do everything in her power" to extradite convicted killer Ira Einhorn from France.

Einhorn, an American citizen who entered France illegally, was tried and convicted in absentia in Pennsylvania for the brutal 1977 murder of Helen Maddux. Einhorn had been hiding in Europe for 16 years and was captured by French authorities last year.

Last December, a French Appeals Court refused to extradite Einhorn to the United States saying that French law allows a retrial for criminals tried in absentia. In January, the Pennsylvania Legislature passed a law that would give Einhorn a new trial if he were returned to the United States.

Pennsylvania's Attorney General, Mike Fisher, asked for the support of Attorneys General nationwide in requesting Secretary of State Albright's assistance in extraditing Einhorn.

"This is not just a Pennsylvania issue," Del Papa said. "Attorneys General nationwide strongly support efforts to hold France to the extradition treaty between our two countries and expedite the return of this cold blooded killer to face justice."

The letter was delivered to the State Department today in order to coincide with the opening of the annual spring meeting of the National Association of Attorneys General in Washington D.C. Del Papa is in the nation's capital to participate in that meeting.

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**March 4, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Ronda Clifton  
(702) 688-1835**

**SPARKS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO INSURANCE FRAUD**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that Mitchell Moore, age 34 of Sparks, pled guilty today to one gross misdemeanor count of a crime related to insurance fraud. Moore pled before Judge Janet Berry in Washoe County District Court. Moore faces the possibility of up to one year in jail and a \$2,000 fine when he is sentenced on April 9, 1998.

Moore led Farmers Insurance Company to believe that property had been stolen out of his ex-wife's house. In fact, Moore had taken the property himself, without his ex-wife's knowledge. Moore then assisted his ex-wife in making a claim to the insurance company. After some suspicions arose regarding the claim, Farmers contacted the Insurance Fraud Unit of the Attorney General's office to investigate. During the investigation, Moore admitted to taking the property from his ex-wife's house and lying to the insurance company.

"Even though Farmers Insurance Company denied payment, misrepresenting information in support of an insurance claim is insurance fraud and forces premiums to rise for everyone," Del Papa said. "The Insurance Fraud Unit of the Attorney General's office has recently been expanded to better meet the growing challenge of insurance fraud in Nevada. This case is just one example of their efforts to bring those who fraudulently deal with insurance companies to justice."

If you are aware of an insurance fraud, call the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Hotline at 1-800-266-8688.

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**March 4, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Paul Taggart  
(702) 687-7317**

**A.G WILL ASK STATE SUPREME COURT TO REVIEW DENIAL OF  
MOTION ASKING TO CLEAR NAMES OF STATE WORKERS**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that her office will go to the Nevada Supreme Court to appeal an Elko County District Court Judge's denial of a motion for expungement involving four state wildlife officials. The Attorney General's office filed the motion in December in an attempt to clear the record of any alleged wrongdoing by the officials, who were accused of criminal activity in a presentment issued by the Elko County Grand Jury.

"We intend to continue in our efforts to formally clear the record of any wrongdoing and restore the reputations of four career state employees, who became embroiled in these legal matters simply because they were doing their job within their statutory authority," Del Papa said.

The accusations included in the presentment involved the state workers' participation with the U.S. Forest Service to determine the amount of deer habitat the Independence Mining Corporation would damage with extended gold mining activity, and how the mining company would provide replacement habitat. The mining company never objected to this determination, but, in February of 1997, the Elko County Grand Jury accused the state workers of oppression under color of office for participating in the mitigation proceedings.

In March, 1997, the district court declined to continue with the matter based upon the statute of limitations. In May, the Attorney General's Office issued a comprehensive legal opinion regarding statutory mitigation authority vis a vis public lands. That opinion also concluded that the state officials in question, with legislative approval, acted within the authority of the law to protect natural resources and that no criminal activity had occurred.

"It is important that we pursue this course because the Elko Grand Jury's action can be interpreted as encouragement for additional unfair actions against state employees, frustrating the state's ability to



fulfill its obligations," Del Papa said. "Officials have to be able to do their work in an atmosphere free of intimidation."

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**April 24, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Richard Linstrom  
(702) 486-3789**

**LAS VEGAS WOMAN ARRESTED FOR INFOMERCIAL  
INVESTMENT SCAM**

Las Vegas - Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Ina Liberty Bell, age 23, of Las Vegas, was arrested on charges related to a scam involving millions of dollars invested in infomercials through a company named "The Sterling Group." Charged with Bell are co-defendants, Eric Steven Stein, age 37, of Las Vegas and Philip Balestrieri of San Diego, California. Warrants have been issued for the arrest of both co-defendants.

According to a 12 count felony complaint filed by the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection, "The Sterling Group" represented to prospective investors that Affordable Media, LLC, d/b/a The Sterling Group promoted products by direct response infomercials. Prospective investors were given the opportunity to purchase infomercial time in increments called "media units." Each "media unit" was sold for \$5,000, with a minimum purchase of two units required. The investors were told that they would receive a portion of the profits resulting from the sale of infomercial products.

The Complaint alleges that the defendants committed securities fraud and racketeering by misrepresenting, among other things, to perspective investors a return of between 25% to 53% within a period of 60 to 90 days. It is further alleged that the defendants failed to disclose material facts to perspective investors, such as that the securities were not registered with the Nevada Secretary of State, Securities Division and that the defendants were not licensed with the State as sales representatives.

The charges are the result of an investigation conducted by the Attorney General's office in conjunction with the Nevada Secretary of State, Securities Division.

If convicted on the charges of Racketeering, Racketeering Conspiracy, Securities Fraud, Offer or Sale of an Unregistered Security, and Transacting Business as an Unlicensed Broker-Dealer and/or Sales Representative, as charged in the complaint, Bell faces up to 70 years in state prison and fines up to

\$170,000. In addition, according to the Nevada Uniform Securities Act, she must be ordered to make restitution to the investors if convicted.

A criminal complaint is merely an accusation. The defendants should be presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

Persons with concerns or complaints regarding "The Sterling Group" or any of the co-defendants should contact the Securities Division in Las Vegas at (702) 486-2440.

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**April 23, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: GREGORY R. HOJNOWSKI  
(702) 486-3783**

**HENDERSON MAN SENTENCED FOR INSURANCE FRAUD**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that Kirk Eugene Grimm, age 29 of Henderson, was sentenced today after pleading no contest to a misdemeanor charge related to his involvement in submitting a false claim for insurance benefits. Terms of the plea negotiation require Grimm to pay \$2000 toward investigative costs incurred by the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit and State Farm's Special Investigative Unit. Grimm also agreed to testify against his co-defendant, Jerald Michael Hemperley. A nationwide warrant has been issued for Hemperley's arrest.

On February 22, 1995, Grimm and Hemperley reported a burglary to North Las Vegas Police. The pair then attempted to collect insurance on the reportedly stolen items by claiming to State Farm that the items belonged to Grimm. An investigation revealed that the items actually belonged to Hemperley, Grimm's roommate, who was not covered under Grimm's homeowner's policy. Grimm and Hemperley then submitted false documentation supporting the claim. Grimm later admitted complicity and State Farm denied the claim.

"As a result of joint efforts by the Insurance Fraud Unit and State Farm, the suspicions regarding the fraudulent claim were confirmed and payment was denied," Del Papa said. "Helping prevent payment on false insurance claims ultimately protects the consumers. The cost of insurance fraud is passed on to the public in the form of higher premiums."

If you have any information regarding insurance fraud, contact the Nevada Office of the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Hotline at 1-800-266-8688.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**

**April 17, 1998**

**(702) 687-3512**

**MEDIA ADVISORY - VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK**

-SOUTH-

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa would like to remind the media and general public that the week of April 19 to 25, 1998 has been designated National Crime Victims' Rights Week. This is a good time to acknowledge the achievements of crime victim advocates and reflect upon the need to continue improving services and promoting victims' rights.

Throughout the week, residents of the Las Vegas area will have the opportunity to participate in a number of special events offering support for crime victims and honoring the many accomplishments of those who fight for victims' rights in our state.

Attorney General Del Papa will be joined by other speakers, including victims, for the "Rainbow of Remembrance" on the steps of the Clark County Courthouse beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 20, 1998.

"Nearly 37 million people in America are touched by crime each year. Over nine million fall prey to violence. Our entire community feels the impact of these crimes through feelings of increased vulnerability and fear for personal safety. We must all be committed to serving the needs and supporting the rights of the victims," Del Papa said. "Crime Victims' Rights Week is a good time to learn of ways in which each of us can volunteer to assist crime victims, such as working on a hotline or helping out at a shelter."

The following is a Las Vegas area Calendar of Events for Victims' Rights Week, 1998. For further information on any of these events, please contact Barbara Schell with the Citizen Committee on Victims' Rights at: (702) 455-4204.

## **1998 CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK**

### **LAS VEGAS AREA CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Sunday, April 19, 1998

11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.: Agency Fair at the Meadows Mall

**Monday, April 20, 1998**

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.: Open House at the Clark County District Attorney's Office, Victim Witness Assistance Center (5th floor, District Court)

**5:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.:**

Rainbow of Remembrance on the steps of the Clark County Courthouse. Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa and other speakers, including victims, balloon release with messages and performance by the childrens group Sign Design.

**Tuesday, April 21, 1998**

All Day: Elder Abuse Awareness Day at the Cannon Senior Center, 340 N. 11th St.

**Wednesday, April 22, 1998**

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.: Ice Cream Social at Victims of Crime office, Grant Sawyer Building, 555 E. Washington Ave., suite 3200.

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.: Book signing with Christina Crawford, "Mommie Dearest" and open house at Southwest Passage, 1101 N. Decatur Blvd.

**Thursday, April 23, 1998**

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.: Family Court Open House, 601 N. Pecos.

**Friday, April 24, 1998**

9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.: Keynote speech and workshop on surviving with Christina Crawford. Workshop on Compassion Fatigue with Felice Lipkint. Awards luncheon and Grant Presentations. Gold Coast Hotel

**Saturday, April 25, 1998**

1:00 p.m. Families of Murder Victims Tree Planting Ceremony and picnic. Floyd Lamb State Park

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**April 17, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**MEDIA ADVISORY - VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK**

**-NORTH-**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa would like to remind the media and general public that the week of April 19 to 25, 1998 has been designated National Crime Victims' Rights Week. This is a good time to acknowledge the achievements of crime victim advocates and reflect upon the need to continue improving services and promoting victims' rights. Throughout the week, concerned citizens will have the opportunity to participate in a number of special events offering support for crime victims and honoring the many accomplishments of those who fight for victims' rights in our state.

Attorney General Del Papa will be joined by other speakers, including Washoe County District Attorney Richard Gammick; J.T. Watson, Officer in Charge of the Reno Office of the INS; UNR Police Office Steve Sauter; and family members of crime victims Mary Dodd, Cammie Minetto, and Marla Emerson, for a Candlelight Vigil for Victims' Rights at the Sparks Amphitheater in Victorian Square beginning at 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, April 19, 1998. The vigil will be emceed by homicide survivor Adriene Angelini of the victims advocacy organization Victory.

"Nearly 37 million people in America are touched by crime each year. Over nine million fall prey to violence. Our entire community feels the impact of these crimes through feelings of increased vulnerability and fear for personal safety. We must all be committed to serving the needs and supporting rights of the victims," Del Papa said. "Crime Victims' Rights Week is a good time to learn of ways in which each of us can volunteer to assist crime victims, such as working on a hotline or helping out at a shelter."

Other Reno area Victims' Rights Week events include a national "Turn on Your Headlights for Victims' Rights Day" on Wednesday, April 22, 1998, and an event will be held at Park Lane Mall from 10:00 a. m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 25, 1998. The event is called the "Network of Agencies" and features



various organizations, including the Attorney General's office, who work to assist victims.

For more information on Victim's Rights Week Activities in the Reno area, or on how to get involved with programs that help victims, contact Adriene Angelini at (702) 626-6689.

**STATE OF NEVADA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

***Protecting Citizens, Solving Problems, Making Government Work***

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**April 17, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**MEDIA ADVISORY - VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK**

**-NORTH-**

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**April 17, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**LAS VEGAS MEDIA ADVISORY**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will be in Las Vegas on Monday, April 20, 1998, attending meetings and conducting official business. Del Papa will also attend the following events during the day:

NOON: Press Conference to introduce new Nevada Drivers Licenses, 7-Eleven Store located at 3716 Paradise, cross street of Twain.

1:00 P.M.: Opening remarks at the Las Vegas seminar on High Technology Crime Awareness and Prevention, Grand Ball Room, Mirage Hotel and Casino.

5:30 P.M.: Speaker, Crime Victims' Rights Week Rainbow of Remembrance rally, steps of the Clark County Courthouse.

Del Papa will be available to interested media at each of these events. For further information, contact Linda Martin with the Las Vegas office of the Attorney General at (702) 486-3198.

**STATE OF NEVADA  
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**April 17, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: John Albrecht  
(702) 687-7332**

**NEW LOOK FOR NEVADA DRIVERS LICENSES WILL HELP  
IDENTIFY YOUNGER DRIVERS**

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A new look for Nevada Drivers Licenses will be unveiled Monday, April 20, 1998. Beginning in April, individuals under 18, and individuals between 18 and 21, who are obtaining a new or duplicate license will have a different colored header bar across the license.

Nevada Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will be joined by representatives from the Department of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety, Nevada Highway Patrol and The Southland Corporation (7-Eleven) for press conferences in Reno and Las Vegas to introduce the new licenses.

**RENO PRESS CONFERENCE**

**APRIL 20, 1998**

**9:00 A.M.**

**7-ELEVEN STORE**

**9800 S. VIRGINIA AT SOUTH MEADOWS PARKWAY**

**LAS VEGAS PRESS CONFERENCE**

**APRIL 20, 1998**

**NOON**

**7-ELEVEN STORE**

**3716 PARADISE ROAD AT TWAIN**

For more information about the press conferences, contact Bob Harmon with the Attorney General's office in Carson City at (702) 687-3512, or Kim Evans with the Department of Motor Vehicles and Public Safety at (702) 687-1300.

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**April 16, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Anne Cathcart  
(702) 687-3541**

**LAS VEGAS CONFERENCE ON HIGH TECHNOLOGY CRIME  
PREVENTION**

The Nevada High Technology Crime Task Force and the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department are co-hosting a joint, executive conference on high technology crime prevention seminar for law enforcement and business leaders on Monday, April 20, 1998.

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will be joined by Sheriff Jerry Keller, Clark County District Attorney Stewart Bell and Mirage Resorts Chairman of the Board Steve Wynn for the opening remarks of the conference beginning at 1:00 P.M.

Executive Conference on High Technology Crime  
Monday, April 20, 1998.  
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Grand Ballroom, Mirage Hotel and Casino  
3400 Las Vegas Blvd.

Experts in the field of computer forensics and other forms of high technology crimes will give comprehensive information about the scope of the problem and the methods used to detect, investigate and prosecute offenders. Business leaders will discuss specific examples of high technology crimes in Nevada and representatives of the Task Force will present proposals to aggressively combat high technology crimes. Information will also be provided about security measures needed to prevent illegal computer intrusions, fraud, theft, and other related crimes.

"Billions of dollars are lost annually due to high technology crime," Del Papa said. "Nevada, and the rest of the country, needs to be better prepared to deal with these criminal activities. Resources, training and cooperation among the business, government, and law enforcement communities is essential in order to effectively fight crime in the age of the Internet."



**STATE OF NEVADA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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**April 15, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFERS TIPS TO HELP BANK EMPLOYEES  
BETTER PROTECT ELDERLY FROM FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION**

The Attorney General's office has just published a new pamphlet which offers tips to bank employees on preventing financial exploitation of the elderly.

Financial exploitation of the elderly may occur at the hands of relatives, caregivers or other persons known to the elder as well as by strangers perpetrating scams and other fraudulent schemes. The Attorney General's pamphlet is intended to assist bank employees in recognizing, responding to, and possibly preventing financial exploitation of the elderly.

The pamphlet discusses some of the more common schemes such as person-to-person confidence scams, telemarketing fraud, and mail scams. The pamphlet then goes on to describe signs of financial exploitation and gives tips on how bank employees can help intervene on behalf of the elder person.

"Nevada has one of the fastest growing senior populations in the country," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "Unfortunately financial exploitation of the elderly is also growing. Just when you think everyone has heard of some of the more common scams we learn of another scheme such as the recent bank examiner fraud. Since banks administer accounts, trusts and other financial assets of elders, they are in a unique position to have early knowledge of financial abuse."

The pamphlet is being distributed to bank employees statewide by the Nevada Banker's Association. Copies may also be obtained by contacting the Attorney General's office in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420, in Reno at (702) 688-1818 or in Carson City at (702) 687-4170.



**STATE OF NEVADA  
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**April 14, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Jane Femiano  
(702) 486-3782**

**STATE SETTLES WITH LAS VEGAS BUSINESS ON DECEPTIVE  
TRADE PRACTICES ALLEGATIONS**

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced today a settlement has been reached with Ten Ton Forklift and Truck Service, Inc. of Las Vegas in a civil lawsuit alleging deceptive trade practices. The Consent Judgment and Stipulation was approved by Clark County District Court Judge Nancy A. Becker.

According to the lawsuit filed by the Attorney General's office in February 1996, Ten Ton routinely charged its customers for services or parts that were never provided. The suit further contended that, by engaging in these unfair and deceptive trade practices, Ten Ton damaged competitiveness among the Las Vegas automotive repair service industry as a whole.

Today's settlement includes an agreement that Ten Ton, its owner or employees, will not, in the future, knowingly represent that services, parts or repairs are necessary when they are not; that Ten Ton will not knowingly bill for goods and services that have not been provided; and that Ten Ton will not knowingly state that goods have been provided when they have not. Additionally, Ten Ton has paid a civil penalty of \$2000 to the State of Nevada and reasonable attorneys fees.

There is no admission of liability by Ten Ton in the Consent Judgment and Stipulation filed with the court. Any violation of the judgment may subject the company to a \$10,000 civil penalty for contempt of court.

Persons suspecting that they have been victims of fraud in the repair of a motor vehicle should contact the Consumer Affairs Division of the Department of Business and Industry in Las Vegas at (702) 486-7353 or in Reno at (702) 688-1800.

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April 3, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Brooke Nielsen**  
**(702) 687-3511**

**JUDGE LANE ISSUES FAVORABLE RULING FOR STATE IN  
TOBACCO LITIGATION**

Second Judicial District Court Judge Mills Lane held today that the Tobacco Institute is a trade association which can be subject to jurisdiction in Nevada. However, he also ruled that the parent and holding companies of RJR Reynolds Tobacco and British American Tobacco are not subject to Nevada jurisdiction because they are too remote. Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said about the ruling: "We are pleased that the Tobacco Institute, along with the tobacco manufacturers, are being required to answer for their conduct in our state."

Although the Court dismissed six of the state's claims, it upheld the majority of the complaint, including the allegations of deceptive trade practices and antitrust violations. The Court also allowed the State of Nevada to proceed on its claims for restitution and unjust enrichment. "The Court has sustained our right to proceed with the major claims against the tobacco companies, and we will continue to aggressively pursue these claims on behalf of the citizens of Nevada," Del Papa said.

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April 3, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512

**ATTORNEY GENERAL ANNOUNCES FOURTH ANNUAL NEVADA  
WOMEN'S ROLE MODEL AWARD RECIPIENTS**

**-SOUTH-**

In recognition of Women's History Month, Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced the names of five honorees in southern Nevada selected to receive the fourth annual Nevada Women's Role Model Award.

"These women have been chosen to receive the Role Model Award because they are making a difference in the lives of others through their contributions to our community," Del Papa said. "They were chosen from among a distinguished group of women nominated for the award by their peers. The selection was extremely difficult since those that were nominated are among the most active and motivated citizens of our state."

The honorees selected to receive the Role Model Award in the south are:

Diana Byrd. Teacher, coach, community leader and poet. Diana's dedication and involvement with the students, staff and community of Cimarron-Memorial High School inspired her nomination for this award by school counselor Brendolyn Black. Recognized by her peers as an outstanding educator, Diana involves herself in a number of school programs from the Human Relations Club to establishing a scholarship award in memory of a student killed by a drunk driver. Diana is also heavily involved with community organizations such as the NAACP and the Girl Scouts, an outstanding basketball coach and a published poet. The following quote is from a letter written to Diana's principal following a Black History month celebration produced by Diana and her Human Relations Club students for the residents of Concorde Retirement Center. Rebekah Morse, Activity Director for the Center wrote,

"I would also like to compliment the wonderful leadership and commitment of Ms. Byrd with her

students. Not only is she an exceptional instructor and leader, but she is also "big sister and best friend" to each and everyone of them. I cannot offer enough praise for her leadership."

Ann Casados-Mueller. Among her responsibilities as Director of Diversity Initiatives for UNLV, Ann conducts training in diversity, discrimination and sexual harassment issues. Ann also works to recruit under-represented groups such as women and minorities for faculty and professional positions. Ann uses her skills to help benefit her community. As a board member of the Latin Chamber of Commerce, Ann has helped to create scholarship programs for Hispanic high school seniors. She has co-chaired the annual Career Day event for the Chamber as well as the annual Latino Youth Leadership Conference held at UNLV. In nominating Ann for the Award, UNVL Director of Marketing Lynette McDonald wrote, "I have seen Ann work throughout the community to generate awareness of issues affecting women and minorities. She is always available to educate community groups about the need for diversity in the workplace and is a real role model who truly exemplifies the 21st century professional woman."

Mary Heine. Mary supervises the Three and Under Unit for the Child Protective Services Division of Clark County Family and Youth Services which provides critical child abuse/neglect investigative and intervention services for children ages three and under who may be at substantial risk of injury or death within their current environment. A native Las Vegas, Mary is described in her nomination letter as the "guru" of child protective services who, "navigated the maze of the system for the benefit of her clients and oftentimes went more than the extra mile to insure that her children and families received the services they needed and deserved." Mary was nominated for the Role Model Award by Linda Ley, Manager of the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program, volunteer advocates for children, who also wrote, "Mary has been the touchstone for best practices in child protective services for over twenty years. Her intelligence, wit, tenacity, passion, and, above all, genuine love brings an immeasurable worth to her co-workers, clients, friends and, most importantly, the children of Nevada."

Genevieve Kucan. Born the first of ten children on a farm in Farming, Minnesota (pop. 250), Jenny Kucan attended school in clothing her mother made from flour sacks. Her love for education and her determination helped her complete high school and be the first in her family to graduate from college. She began a career as an English teacher which brought her to Las Vegas in 1961. Through innovation and her dedication to students, Jenny has found many unique ways to make learning a positive experience for her students including the Distinguished Scholars Program which challenges gifted learners in Clark County high schools. Jenny recently became a founding member of the Partnership at Las Vegas (PAL) Program which helps introduce Las Vegas High School students to the working world by visiting a job site one day a week. Jenny was also a founding member of a non-profit community theater group, a volunteer for a children's theater company, and has found time to complete her master's degree in education. "All the while, Jenny's every activity has been completed with warmth, determination, great humor, and motherly concern," wrote fellow teacher Robert Bray in his nomination letter. "Perhaps this is why Jenny can barely go to the local market without a former student approaching with open arms. She is the proof of the impact her role modeling has had on our state."

Conee Spano. Director of the Jean Nidetch Women's Center at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas,

Conee was the subject of numerous nomination letters. Michelle Wright, who works at the University's Disability Resource Center and volunteers at the Woman's Center, wrote, "Connie has brought the Women's Center to the forefront of public awareness for promoting a multitude of issues impacting women. She has promoted the Center vigorously to bring it to the attention of the community at large as a place to come for questions and support." Sandra Pratt, Office Manager of the Women's Center wrote, "If a job needs doing, she doesn't ask why, she commits. If someone doesn't know how, she guides. She motivates, while allowing you to learn for yourself. She involves herself on committees that benefit the stature of the community she serves. In the eyes of her peers, her co-workers, her children, and those women and men she hopes to empower, she is an example of honesty, integrity, self-reliance and humility. I could not think of anyone more deserving the title, Nevada Women's Role Model."

"These outstanding Nevada Women are being recognized for their significant contribution to our communities, our state and our history," Del Papa said. "Their unique combination of talent and effort and their unending commitment to bettering their own lives, the lives of their neighbors, and the community at large are what makes them stand out among their peers."

The southern Nevada recipients of the Nevada Women's Role Model Awards will be recognized during the 1998 Eye on Women Expo in Las Vegas:

WOMEN'S ROLE MODEL AWARD PRESENTATION  
1998 EYE ON WOMEN EXPO  
SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1998  
12:15 P.M. - 12:30 P.M.  
MGM GRAND CONVENTION CENTER, LAS VEGAS

Media wishing to interview any of the recipients prior to the presentation may contact Bob Harmon with the Attorney General's office at (702) 687-3512.

**STATE OF NEVADA  
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April 3, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**  
**(702) 687-3512**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL ANNOUNCES FOURTH ANNUAL NEVADA  
WOMEN'S ROLE MODEL AWARD RECIPIENTS**

**-NORTH-**

In recognition of Women's History Month, Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced the names of five honorees in northern Nevada selected to receive the fourth annual Nevada Women's Role Model Award.

"These women have been chosen to receive the Role Model Award because they are making a difference in the lives of others through their contributions to our community," Del Papa said. "They were chosen from among a distinguished group of women nominated for the award by their peers. The selection was extremely difficult since those who were nominated are among the most active and motivated citizens of our state."

The honorees selected to receive the Role Model Award in the north are:

Adriene Angelini. Since the murder of her father, Adriene has dedicated herself to the development of numerous community programs to help the families of victims of violent crime and volunteers in both the Repeat Offender Program and Major Crime Unit of the Reno Police Department. Adriene also organizes Victims' Rights Week Activities such as the candlelight vigil, bowling fund-raiser, and tree planting ceremonies. In his nomination letter, Detective Scott Hopkins of the Reno Police Department's Repeat Offender Program, said that Adriene is a loving and caring single mother who, even though she has dedicated much of her time to helping other families deal with the loss of their loved ones, still finds the time to volunteer a couple of days a month in her son's kindergarten class.

Ellie Lopez-Bowlan. Ellie has used her experience and training as a registered nurse to benefit others by involving herself in many organizations that have helped create and implement health programs for the

Latino community including an AIDS education program at Nevada Hispanic Services that received national recognition in 1996. She also participated in the development of a clinic for the homeless and those who cannot pay for health care at the Salvation Army, and serves on several state and local boards dedicated to health issues, education, and women. In nominating Ellie, UNR Professor Emma Sepulveda said, "Ms. Lopez is one of the strongest and most dedicated leaders in our community. She has devoted her life to helping the Latino community find solutions to the desperate need for better health care. No one has ever been a stronger or more capable advocate for patients than Ellie Lopez-Bowlan."

Patricia Casarez. Principal of Roger Corbett Elementary School in Reno, Patricia's achievements have significant impact on the lives of her students. Patricia has implemented a school wide literacy program to better provide the essential skills of reading and writing to her at-risk students, initiated a year-round school program intended to increase the benefits of education, and has pursued and been awarded numerous grants which enable her students to better themselves in math and science, reading and writing, and participate in intercultural exchange programs. She also sets a positive example to the women and girls of the school community and provides inspiration and hope that they can accomplish their goals. In nominating Patricia, Roger Corbett School Counselor Gail Palchikoff wrote: "Ms. Casarez is a leader and a risk-taker with a vision. She works every day to better her own life and the lives of the girls and women in this community. She is a fighter; she fights for equality, she fights for human dignity, and she fights so that all women and girls may be the best that they can be."

Jean Ford. Founder of the Nevada Women's History Project, Jean is a former legislator who served two terms in the state assembly and one term in the state senate. Jean was also a member of the state Tourism Commission and has been a teacher in the Women's Studies Department at the University of Nevada, Reno, since 1991. She was director of the Women's Studies Department from 1991 to 1995. Jean was nominated for the Role Model Award by Sonia Dehart of Genoa who has been a resident of Nevada since 1906 and who wrote, "Jean has been an inspiration to all of us who love Nevada."

Jean McNicoll. An elder in the Washoe Tribe, Jean visits school children from around the Tahoe Basin and the Carson Valley. From Jean, whom they call "Yetta," the children learn of the Washoe Tribe and develop an appreciation for the area's native people. Jean also teaches Washoe children so that the Tribe's traditions will live in future generations. Jean is also teaching the skill of basketry, ensuring that the beautiful baskets for which the Washoe are renown will continue to be made in the future and is looking forward to teaching her niece how to make a rabbit skin blanket this summer. Lisa O'Daly, Community Planner for the U.S. Forest Service nominated Jean. "Role models, through their action, teach by example. From Jean McNicoll, one learns that the Washoe are a living people, not just a piece of Nevada history. I credit Jean with the ability to build a bridge between two worlds, bringing them closer together," O'Daly said.

"These outstanding Nevada Women are being recognized for their significant contribution to our communities, our state and our history," Del Papa said. "Their unique combination of talent and effort and their unending commitment to bettering their own lives, the lives of their neighbors and the community at large, are what makes them stand out among their peers."

The northern Nevada recipients of the Nevada Women's Role Model Awards will be recognized during the April meeting of the Truckee Meadows Human Services Association:

WOMEN'S ROLE MODEL AWARD PRESENTATION

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 1998

11:45 A. M.

TRUCKEE MEADOWS HUMAN SERVICES ASSOCIATION MEETING

GIRL SCOUT HEADQUARTERS

605 WASHINGTON

RENO

Media wishing to interview any of the recipients prior to the presentation may contact Bob Harmon with the Attorney General's office at (702) 687-3512.



**STATE OF NEVADA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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April 3, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Dave Sarnowski**  
**(702) 687-3536**

**GALLEGO UPDATE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa learned today that the United States Supreme Court has denied a request by the Attorney General's office to file an appeal "out-of-time" in the case of Gerald Gallego. The motion was filed last month after the Attorney General's office learned that the petition had been mailed by United Parcel Service rather than first class mail in the United States Postal Service and failed to make the statutory deadline to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Attorney General's office filed the motion asking for an extension of time based on the argument that the decision to mail by UPS was made by the state mailroom and out of the control of the Attorney General's office.

On Thursday, April 2, the Attorney General's office submitted a cross-petition to an appeal filed by Gallego with the U.S. Supreme Court. The state's cross-petition raises different issues than those raised by Gallego and gives the state the opportunity to present its argument on the merits of this case to the U.S. Supreme Court but only if the U.S. Supreme Court accepts Gallego's appeal.

Gallego was convicted in June of 1984 for the April 1980 murders of Karen Twiggs and Stacey Redican and sentenced to death by a jury in Pershing County. On September 15, 1993, Gallego filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus in federal court raising 40 claims for relief. U.S. District Judge Howard McKibben denied all his claims and Gallego went to the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals which upheld Judge McKibben on all grounds except one issue regarding the jury instructions. The Court determined that the jury was inadequately informed as to whether or not it was necessary to sentence him to death in Nevada to ensure that he could not be released after serving only a relatively brief period.

In addition to the murder convictions in Nevada, Gallego was also convicted and sentenced to death by a California court for the November 1980 murders of Craig Miller and Mary Beth Sowers.

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**April 3, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Paul Taggart  
(702) 687-7317**

**A.G. ASKS NEVADA SUPREME COURT TO REVIEW DENIAL OF  
MOTION ASKING TO CLEAR NAMES OF STATE WORKERS**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that her office has filed an appeal with the Nevada Supreme Court, asking the Court to review a decision by an Elko County judge denying a motion for expungement involving four state wildlife officials.

Last December, the Attorney General's office filed the motion for expungement in an attempt to clear the record of any alleged wrongdoing by William Molini, Larry Barngrover, Duane Erickson, and Kenneth Gray, four employees of the State Division of Wildlife who were accused of criminal activity in a presentment issued by the Elko Grand Jury earlier in the year. On March 3 of this year, Elko District Judge Michael Memeo denied the Attorney General's request for expungement of those accusations.

"These state employees need their names cleared of any wrongdoing and a message must be sent to the Elko County Grand Jury that their purpose should not be to frustrate legitimate state actions," Del Papa said.

The accusations involved the state workers' participation with the U.S. Forest Service to determine the amount of deer habitat the Independence Mining Corporation would damage with extended gold mining activity, and how the mining company would provide replacement habitat. The mining company never objected to this determination, but, in February of 1977, the Elko County Grand Jury accused the state workers of oppression under color of office for participating in the mitigation proceedings.

In March, 1997, the Elko District Court declined to continue with the matter based on the statute of limitations. In May, 1997, the Attorney General's office issued a comprehensive legal opinion regarding statutory mitigation authority vis a vis public lands. That opinion also concluded that the state officials in question, with legislative approval, acted within the authority of the law to protect natural resources and that no criminal activity had occurred.

"We are asking the State Supreme Court to help restore the reputations of these state workers and to protect other state workers from similar abuses of grand jury authority," Del Papa said. "Officials have to be able to do their job in an atmosphere free of intimidation."

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**April 2, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Grenville Pridham  
(702) 486-3777**

**DEFENDANTS SENTENCED FOR ILLEGAL STOCK SALES**

Reno - Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that Robert Lee Fullerton, 63, and Corinne Bennett, 35, both of Reno, were sentenced today by Judge Deborah A. Agosti in Washoe District Court to seven consecutive two-year prison terms for their roles in selling unregistered stock. The defendants' sentences were suspended and Fullerton and Bennett were placed on probation for seven consecutive terms of five years each, for a total of 35 years of probation. In addition to their suspended prison sentence, the defendants were also each ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$130,500 to their victims. As a condition of probation, the defendants may not sell unregistered securities and must pay at least \$10,000 in the first year towards restitution.

Fullerton and Bennett were convicted by a jury on January 22, 1998 of 21 counts of sale of unregistered securities. The jury convictions of Fullerton and Bennett arose out of a scheme in which Fullerton and Bennett sold unregistered stock in a corporation called First Phoenix. Beginning in June 1989 through September 1990, Fullerton and Bennett promoted the stock to Reno residents as a means to invest in Fullerton's "zipnut," a fastening device he patented in 1983. The defendants did not register the stock with the Securities Division as required under law. The investors believed that they were investing in the "zipnut;" however, the patent rights had been assigned to another corporation and the investors lost their principal and any profits that they were supposed to receive.

"Violation of the laws which protect Nevada investors will not be tolerated," Del Papa warned. She also explained that start-up businesses which "play by the rules" are deprived of needed capital when investor's funds are diverted to schemes which have not been subjected to regulation and financial disclosures under the law. Del Papa suggests that persons who are novice investors should exercise caution when investing in a start-up company.

Nevadans who believe that they have been the victim of an investment fraud scheme should contact the Attorney General's Fraud Hotline in Las Vegas at 486-3777. Or contact the Attorney General's office statewide by calling Nevada's toll free switchboard at 1-800-992-0900.



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**April 2, 1998  
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CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
Telephone: (702) 687-3512**

**STATE ARGUES TOBACCO CASE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that a court hearing in the state's litigation against the tobacco industry is scheduled to take place on Friday, April 3, 1998 before Judge Mills Lane, in Washoe District Court. Judge Lane will hear arguments concerning various motions filed by the tobacco companies to dismiss the state's lawsuit which was filed in May 1997 against 19 tobacco firms. The arguments, which begin at 9:30 a.m., are scheduled to last most of the day.

The 126 page complaint filed by the Attorney General's office on behalf of the state seeks monetary damages, civil penalties, declaratory and injunctive relief, restitution, disgorgement of profits, and punitive damages. Specifically, the state is seeking reimbursement for tobacco related health care costs for Nevada's Medicaid and other health care programs. The suit also seeks to reduce youth smoking, as well as extensive advertising restrictions and funding for a corrective public education campaign.

"The decades long illegal conspiracy of the tobacco industry to addict our youth and hide the truth about tobacco from the American public must end. In order to better protect our children and to better obtain reimbursement for the millions of dollars spent by the state every year on tobacco related illness, we intend to change the way tobacco does business in Nevada," Del Papa said.

The state estimates that at least \$20 million to \$30 million a year is expended through the state Medicaid and other programs for tobacco illnesses. The actual cost is likely to be higher.

On June 20, 1997, Del Papa and Attorneys General from 40 other states reached a historic settlement agreement with the tobacco industry which would provide all of the relief sought in the state's case and more. The settlement agreement serves as the foundation for proposed federal legislation, such as the Senate bill just approved by the Senate Commerce Committee this week. A number of other bills have been introduced to implement various parts of the Attorneys General June 1997 agreement.

"The Attorney General settlement, together with Congressional action, will help bring about comprehensive and lasting solutions benefiting the overall public health, starting with our children," Del Papa said.

The law firm Hagens & Berman of Seattle, Washington, and several other attorneys are assisting the Attorney General's office in representing the state of Nevada in this case.

**STATE OF NEVADA  
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**May 22, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: John Albrecht  
(702) 687-7332**

**RETAIL CLERKS KNOW TOBACCO LAW**

A recent study conducted by the Attorney General's office and the retail industry showed that Nevada retail clerks know the state and federal laws regulating the sale of tobacco to children. Approximately 1,200 sales associates responded to a research project which tested their knowledge of the law and how to reduce tobacco sales in their stores. The test included questions on the legal age to purchase tobacco and recommended what a clerk should do in the event an underage child attempted to buy tobacco.

More than 90 % of the sales staff responding got 90 % or more of the answers correct. The average score was 91 % correct. This week the test scores were reported to the more than 200 stores whose staff mailed in the survey. Each store received a letter from Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa reporting the number of clerks completing the test and the average score of those responding at that store.

"The response of the sales associates and stores to this voluntary survey demonstrates that the training and education aspect of efforts by the retail community and the Attorney General's office to help cut down on the sale of tobacco to underage children has had a successful impact," Del Papa said.

Peter Krueger, State Executive of the Nevada Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association, said, "The results of this survey again demonstrate that tobacco retailers and their employees are very serious about eliminating underage purchase of tobacco products. We are committed to do more to prevent underage customers from buying at our stores. We have a great record in Nevada." Krueger helped develop the test which was mailed to stores in January, 1998.

In 1995, the Attorney General was assigned the responsibility of conducting random inspections or "stings" of all retail locations which sell tobacco. Since that time over 5,000 stings have been completed and the buy rate -- the percentage of times that underage youth are able to buy tobacco -- has dropped from 63 % to 19.8 % in a study completed in the summer, 1997.



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**May 22, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Linda Martin  
(702) 486-3198**

**LAS VEGAS MEDIA ADVISORY**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will be in Las Vegas on Tuesday afternoon, May 26, 1998. Del Papa will be available through the Las Vegas office of the Attorney General from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.

On Thursday, May 28, 1998, Del Papa will be in Las Vegas to attend a groundbreaking ceremony for St. Vincent's HELP Transitional Housing Development at 11:00 a.m., 1501 Las Vegas Blvd. North. The housing development is a partnership between Catholic Charities of Nevada and HELP USA. For further information please contact Maria Cuomo Cole of HELP at (702) 385-2622.

Del Papa will also participate in the Southern Nevada Senior Summit on Thursday, May 28, and Friday May, 29:

On Thursday, May 28, Del Papa will be part of a panel presentation on Elder Abuse, Senior Suicide and Fraud Against Seniors from 9:45 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. The summit will be held at Arizona Charlie's, 740 South Decatur, Las Vegas.

On Friday, May 29, the Senior Summit will be held at the Henderson Convention Center, 200 Water Street, Henderson. Again, Del Papa will be part of a panel discussion on Elder Abuse, Senior Suicide and Fraud Against Seniors starting at 9:45 a.m.

Del Papa will be available to the media at each of these events, or by contacting Linda Martin with the Las Vegas Office of the Attorney General at (702) 486-3198.

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**May 22, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Melanie Meehan-Crossley  
(702) 687-3515**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL CONVENES ADULT LITERACY TASK  
FORCE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa has invited persons from throughout the state who have expertise and interest in the problem of adult low-literacy in Nevada to join in an active discussion of that issue in Reno on Wednesday, May 27, 1998.

**ADULT LITERACY TASK FORCE MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 1998  
10:00 A.M. - NOON  
SIERRA VISTA LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM  
OLD TOWN MALL  
4001 S. VIRGINIA STREET, RENO**

"This problem is often called the 'silent epidemic'," Del Papa said. "It is estimated that in Nevada, more than 200,000 adults age 18 and older have less than a high school diploma. Thousands more cannot speak English. They must function in a world that increasingly demands a literacy competency that has alluded them."

Vicki Newell, Project Coordinator of the Literate Nevada Project said, "This task force is an opportunity to begin an active dialogue with judicial and business communities, among others, to assist adult education programs to better serve target populations of educationally disadvantaged adults."

Task Force participants are expected to discuss how low-level literacy skills impact their communities and organizations, identify key needs to be addressed, explore options for collaboration in priority areas and prepare an action plan for the next 12 months.

The Attorney General's office was asked to assist with the organization of the Adult Literacy Task

Force, in part, because the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection is currently conducting a survey of telecommunication services. One of the goals of the survey is to enhance educational opportunities statewide.

For more information on the Adult Literacy Task Force, please contact Deputy Attorney General Melanie Meehan-Crossley in Carson City at (702) 687-3515.

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**May 21, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Jane Femiano  
(702) 486-3782**

**TRAVEL SCAM SENTENCE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that Jouko Lankinen, age 44 of Las Vegas, was sentenced today in Clark County District Court on charges related to a travel scam which victimized tourists coming to Las Vegas.

Lankinen had previously pled guilty, by way of an Alford plea, to two gross misdemeanor counts of conspiracy to obtain money by false pretenses. An Alford plea is an admission by a defendant that the government could prove the elements of the crime charged, but in which the defendant denies any responsibility. As part of the negotiated plea agreement, Lankinen agreed to pay approximately \$15,000 in restitution to his twenty-two victims and received credit for jail time served.

In October 1997, Lankinen was arrested by the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection in connection with a scheme in which tourists paid for hotel reservations, by check, through Lankinen's business the "Las Vegas Welcome Center." According to the complaint, when the victims arrived in Las Vegas and checked into their hotels, they discovered their rooms had not been prepaid or were only prepaid for one night and that payment had been charged to their credit card number. Victims ended up having to pay for their accommodations a second time upon checking out of the hotel. Lankinen did not pay the hotels for the reserved accommodations and did not refund the visitors their money.

Persons who think they have been defrauded by a travel agency should contact the State Consumers Affairs Division in Las Vegas at (702) 486-7355, and in Reno at (702) 688-1800.

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**May 21, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Grenville Pridham  
702-486-3788**

**TELEMARKETERS ARRESTED IN UNDERCOVER STING**

Las Vegas -- Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that a 55-year-old Las Vegas resident using multiple identifications, tentatively identified as "Richard Hoffman," was arrested yesterday by investigators from the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection for attempted obtaining money under false pretenses and unregistered telemarketing. Michael Ghiazza, age 37, of Las Vegas, was arrested with Hoffman on an outstanding federal warrant for wire fraud. This case arose out of an investigation conducted by the Southern Nevada Telemarketing Task Force which includes the Office of the Nevada Attorney General, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the F.B.I., and United States Postal Inspectors.

According to the Attorney General's office, a victim in California was contacted by a male telephone caller who told the victim that he was randomly chosen to receive \$55,000. The victim was then told that in order to receive his prize, he must first send \$5,500 in cash via express delivery to an address in Las Vegas. The victim contacted law enforcement, who arranged an undercover operation in which agents posed as deliverymen and left the delivery at a vacant apartment, as directed by the fraudulent telemarketer. Hoffman picked up the package while Ghiazza acted as a lookout. The defendants were arrested immediately.

Del Papa warned that "It is illegal to require an advance fee in order to receive a prize, and that legitimate businesses do not require such prepayments."

The maximum penalty for attempted obtaining money under false pretenses is 3 years in state prison and a fine of \$5,000. The maximum penalty for unregistered telemarketing is 4 years in state prison and a fine of \$50,000. Declarations of Arrest are merely allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until they are proven guilty in a court of law.

Persons who may have been the victim of telemarketing fraud should contact the Attorney General's Telemarketing Hotline in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3194.



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**May 19, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Contact: Anne Cathcart  
(702) 687-3541**

**MICHAEL McCORMICK NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE  
NEVADA PROSECUTION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa, who chairs the Nevada Prosecution Advisory Council, announced today that Michael McCormick, Humboldt County District Attorney for the past eight years, has accepted the position of Executive Director for the Council. McCormick will begin his new job on June 5 and will be located in the Reno office of the Attorney General.

"Mike has tremendous enthusiasm and energy, as well as a strong commitment to the success of this program," Del Papa said. "Mike was a strong proponent for the legislation passed during the 1997 legislative session which established the Prosecution Advisory Council. Mike is committed to guiding the Council in its primary mission to help provide the needed additional education and training for city, county and state prosecutors, as well as assisting with both criminal and civil prosecutions when needed."

"It is very important, especially for the rural counties, that we have training available every year for new prosecutors," said McCormick, who envisions a program offering ongoing courses in areas where the law changes constantly. "For example, the domestic violence and DUI laws become more and more complex every year, and we need to stay on top of these changes." McCormick anticipates collaborating with such entities as the U.S. Attorney's office, the Nevada High Technology Crime Task Force, the Boyd School of Law and with the National Judicial College in presenting different courses.

"Some of the courses also will cover subjects such as death penalty litigation, juvenile justice problems, high technology crime, reckless driving, consumer fraud, and child abuse and elder abuse cases," McCormick added.

"This job offers many challenges including the coordination with law enforcement and other public agencies at various levels to train and educate not only prosecutors, but also law enforcement officers

and judges," said McCormick. "It is critical that the Executive Director aggressively seek grants and other sources of initial funding to supplement legislative funding."

Another important mission for the Executive Director is to help prosecutors throughout the state learn how to use computers and other high technology methods successfully. "In the age of the Internet, we cannot afford to be behind in the use of technology. Our rural prosecutors especially need assistance in coordinating their efforts, sharing information, and ensuring access to criminal justice databases." Del Papa said.

A 1986 graduate of Willamette University College of Law, McCormick received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Nevada Reno. He worked for the Nevada Division of State Parks prior to law school.



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**May 19, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Marty Howard  
(702) 486-3120**

**LAS VEGAS MAN PLEADS GUILTY FOR MAKING INSURANCE  
CLAIM ON AUTO POLICY HE BOUGHT AFTER ACCIDENT**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that Bernard G. Johnson, age 43 of Las Vegas, pled guilty today before Clark County District Judge Joseph Pavlikowski to one count of attempted insurance fraud. A combined investigation by the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit and the National Insurance Crime Bureau revealed that Johnson misrepresented an insurance claim following an injury accident on January 25, 1998 on Lee Canyon Road in the Mt. Charleston area.

Johnson reported that he was rear ended, slid on the ice, then rear ended the driver in front of him. According to the investigation, this accident occurred at 12 noon. At 2:45 p.m. that day, Johnson purchased an auto insurance policy from Nevada General Insurance Company, concealing the fact that he had just been in an accident. Johnson then provided the insurance information to the investigating officer as if the insurance policy was in effect at the time of the accident.

A substantial claim was made against Johnson's policy on behalf of an injured passenger. The insurance company questioned the claim, denied payment, and the case was referred to the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit and the National Insurance Crime Bureau for investigation. Until confronted by an Attorney General investigator, Johnson maintained that the insurance company was in error and denied the claim based on mistaken information. Johnson finally admitted his fraud in a handwritten letter.

Johnson is scheduled to be sentenced on September 17, 1998. As part of the plea agreement, Johnson will pay the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit to help reimburse the cost of the investigation.

"The Johnson case is evidence of the continued prosecution efforts of the Insurance Fraud Unit," Del Papa said. "Since October, the Insurance Fraud Unit has arrested 24 and convicted 15 individuals for crimes concerning insurance fraud. Insurance fraud will not be tolerated in Nevada."

If you have any information concerning insurance fraud, call the Insurance Fraud Hotline at 1-800-266-8688.

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**May 18, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: JoAnne Embry  
(702) 486-3154**

**A.G.'S OFFICE PROVIDES FREE CHILD IDENTIFICATION  
PACKETS AS PART OF MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY OBSERVANCE**

The Attorney General's Missing Children Clearinghouse and Crime Prevention Unit is asking Nevadans to observe the 15th annual International Missing Children's Day on Monday, Memorial Day, May 25, 1998.

"I encourage residents to join in this year's annual 'Keep the Porch Lights On' campaign May 25 as a symbolic gesture of our shared concern for missing children," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. The campaign originated with the abduction of 12-year-old Johnny Gosch from Iowa in 1982. Johnny disappeared one morning while delivering newspapers. Johnny's family had a rule that the last one home at night would turn off the porch light. Since Johnny has never returned home, the family keeps their porch light on to this day.

"Nationwide, almost a million children were reported missing last year - over 7,000 children were reported missing in Nevada. Turning on your porchlight is a symbolic demonstration of the hope that all our nation's missing children will find their way home," Del Papa said.

**IN OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY, THE NEVADA MISSING CHILDREN CLEARINGHOUSE AND NEVADA CHILD SEEKERS WILL SPONSOR A CHILD SAFETY DAY ON SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1998, FROM 11 A.M. TO 3 P.M. AT THE BOULEVARD MALL LOCATED AT 3528 S. MARYLAND PARKWAY IN LAS VEGAS.**

Child identification packets and child safety guides will be offered free of charge to parents and children. The materials are designed to help educate parents on how to help keep their children safe and how to help prevent a child abduction. Posters of Nevada's missing children will be displayed and copies of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's "8 Rules of Safety" will be distributed.

Each year, the Nevada Clearinghouse and Nevada Child Seekers fingerprint thousands of area children and provide their parents with free child identification kits which include photographs, fingerprints and a resource envelope containing emergency and support numbers for parents.

In addition to Nevada Child Seekers and the Nevada Clearinghouse, volunteers from Westcare, Nevada's only runaway shelter and youth detoxification center, and the Citizen's Committee on Victim's Rights will be on site to provide additional resources and safety literature.

The Nevada Missing Children Clearinghouse, located in the office of the Attorney General, focuses on the investigation, location, and reunification of children missing as a result of a parental or family abduction. The Clearinghouse also assists and provides training to all Nevada law enforcement on issues concerning violations of child custody rights. In 1997, the Clearinghouse investigated 271 cases of family abductions and received 146 referrals from other agencies. Of those, 264 cases were resolved. So far this year, the Clearinghouse has investigated 107 family abductions and 104 referrals from other agencies. Of those cases, 113 have been resolved.

Last November, the Nevada Clearinghouse was named as the first agency to initiate the project "Missing Kids 100,000," aimed at getting pictures and information of over 100,000 missing children onto the worldwide web. "Missing Kids 100,000" enhances the website of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in order to dramatically increase the exchange of information about missing children on an international scale.

For more information on Child Safety Day or the Nevada Missing Children Clearinghouse, please contact JoAnne Embry at (702) 486-3154.

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**May 18, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Jan Murray  
(702) 486-3433**

**LAS VEGAS MAN PAYS RESTITUTION FOR INSURANCE FRAUD**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that William Lancaster, age 25 of Las Vegas, pled guilty to one count of attempted insurance fraud this morning before Clark County District Court Judge John S. McGroarty.

In a negotiated plea agreement, Lancaster admitted that he filed a false claim for insurance benefits with Sentry/Dairyland Insurance Company after he falsely reported both to police and the insurance company that his 1992 Jeep Wrangler had been stolen from his apartment complex.

As part of the plea agreement, Lancaster agreed to reimburse Sentry/Dairyland over \$6,000 for benefits paid out and costs incurred by the company to investigate the false claim.

Lancaster is scheduled to be sentenced on July 6, 1998. He faces a sentence of up to one year in county jail and/or a \$2,000 fine.

"Insurance fraud is a growing national problem and consumers ultimately pay the price through higher policy rates. With each prosecution, the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit continues to send the message that insurance fraud will not be tolerated in Nevada," Del Papa said.

If you have any information regarding insurance fraud, please call the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Hotline at 1-800-266-8688.

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**May 7, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Cooper  
(702) 687-6300**

**FEDERAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS FUNDS AVAILABLE TO  
RURAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS**

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced today that applications are now being accepted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for a \$400 million universal service fund program created by the FCC to help ensure that rural health care providers are able to afford telecommunications services.

"These federal funds are vital for helping rural Nevadans gain access to rapidly changing telecommunications technologies," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "For example, video technologies could be used to help link a patient in rural Nevada with medical treatment hundreds of miles away, saving the patient hours of driving time for treatment of a non-critical illness."

A 75-day window for rural health care providers to file applications with the federal Rural Health Care Corporation (RHCC) opened on May 1, 1998. Interested providers have until July 15, 1998 to submit their applications or they will not be able to apply again until the following year.

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection has the three necessary application forms required by the FCC and is available to assist rural health care providers in getting them submitted in a timely manner. Contact Bob Cooper with the Consumer Protection Bureau at (702) 687-6300.

In the last two months, the Bureau has hired a telecommunications engineer and a program outreach specialist to help rural Nevadans deal with the complex maze of discount programs and applications that exist not just for health care providers, but also for many other rural telecommunications customers including schools, libraries, and low income customers.

"The Bureau is now better equipped to play an important role in helping rural Nevadans identify, and take advantage of, new telecommunications technologies that can meet a wide range of needs, from

consultation with a physician who is several hundred miles a way, to Internet access for homes and school."

For further information about applications for the universal service fund, or telecommunication technologies, please contact Bob Cooper with the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection at (702) 687-6300. Fund application forms and instructions are also available on the RHCC website at [rhccfund.org](http://rhccfund.org).

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**May 5, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Mike Dreitzer  
(702) 486-3083**

**DEL PAPA TO SPEAK AT YOUTH FOR JUSTICE CONFERENCE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will be in Las Vegas on Thursday, May 7, 1998, to deliver the keynote speech at the Nevada Bar Association's Youth for Justice Conference. The conference gathers a group of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders from Las Vegas area public and private schools to participate in a series of workshops and discussions. Del Papa will talk about ways for Nevada's youth to get involved with positive programs in their community as well as updating the Attorney General's statewide Juvenile Justice Initiative which was introduced last year. Del Papa is scheduled to speak from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

**YOUTH FOR JUSTICE CONFERENCE  
THURSDAY, MAY 7, 1998  
8:30 A.M.  
TOURNAMENT PLAYERS CLUB  
SUMMERLIN**

"A couple of weeks ago, the lead story on the nightly news was the fact that kids brought loaded guns to three Clark County schools that day. In the wake of recent tragedies across America involving juveniles and crime, and recent reports about rising violence in our nation's schools, it is particularly important for all of us to reflect on the importance of joining together to better enhance and coordinate our efforts to reduce the incidences of juvenile violence in our state," Del Papa said.

The Attorney General's Juvenile Justice Initiative focuses on using the statewide resources of the Attorney General's office to help better coordinate and support the efforts and needs of existing community-based juvenile delinquency programs. To that end, the Attorney General's office has been working on a plan that includes resource sharing, developing a program to help better promote positive behavior among school-aged children, and creating a Comprehensive Sanctions Panel to find creative ways of dealing with juvenile offenders.



"During the past year, staff from the Attorney General's office has reviewed and cataloged juvenile justice material from a variety of sources," Del Papa said. "This information has since been shared with juvenile justice officials from various counties, educators, court officials, various non-profit organizations and other interested citizens. We are also in the process of compiling an 'Attorney General's Juvenile Justice Resource Catalogue' to help us more efficiently disseminate information about successful and innovative juvenile justice programs in our state and nationally. We also have a 30-minute video highlighting successful and innovative juvenile violence prevention efforts available to interested parties."

As part of the Juvenile Justice Initiative, the Attorney General's office is also promoting the Attorney General's Class Act Program. This program capitalizes on the importance of mentorship relationships in the lives of children. Volunteers from the Attorney General's office and other organizations will work with small groups of youth to help them to understand the judicial system using language and role-playing that makes sense to kids. In this process, the kids learn respect for the rule and reason of law and law enforcement, as well as gain a keen understanding of the tragic consequences that result from violent actions.

Statistics show that 75% of the most serious crimes are committed by 15% of recidivist juvenile offenders. That means the vast majority of offenses are committed by one-time offenders. Effective and innovative sanctioning methods need to be developed to help keep kids on the right path at the crucial "first offense" threshold. "Our Juvenile Justice Initiative is working towards the creation of a Comprehensive Sanctions Panel to find creative ways of dealing with the first time offender. If we can get to them then, studies show we have a better chance of keeping them on the right side of the law," Del Papa said.

The Attorney General's office will continue to lend support to the Legislative Commission that, among other things, is examining the use of alternative methods of adjudication of children alleged to be delinquent and in need of supervision such as teen courts and community sentencing panels. The Attorney General's office has also volunteered to play a key role in the implementation of any recommendations offered by the Commission to the legislature.

"A recent study shows that today in America we have 2 million juvenile arrests each year accounting for 20% of all violent crime committed. The rapid increase of population in Nevada makes it crucial to support efforts in our state that work toward juvenile crime prevention. I have taken a personal interest in these efforts as their success sits at the core of the future well-being of our state," Del Papa said.

For further information on the Juvenile Justice Initiative, contact Deputy Attorney General Mike Dreitzer at (702) 486-3083.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jan Murray**

**June 30, 1998**

**(702) 486-3433**

**LAS VEGAN ADMITS TO FALSE INSURANCE CLAIM**

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit announced today that Lawrence W. Morris, age 34 of Las Vegas, pled guilty to one count of attempted insurance fraud related to filing a false claim for auto insurance benefits with Occidental Fire and Casualty. Morris admitted he falsely reported both to police and the insurance company that his 1993 Nissan pickup had been stolen while he was eating at a Las Vegas restaurant.

Two weeks after the vehicle was reported stolen, the California Highway Patrol discovered dismantled parts belonging to Morris' pickup during a routine check of salvaged auto parts. The investigation that followed revealed that Morris arranged to have his vehicle driven out of state to his mother's business, Paws Transportation, in Ceres, California where the vehicle was dismantled. The case was then referred to the Nevada Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit for prosecution. This case has also been referred for prosecution in California.

As a result of this investigation, Morris received no money from the insurance company but will have a permanent criminal record.

"Today's conviction was the result of the continuous cooperation between agencies in Nevada and California to fight insurance fraud in both states," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said.

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June 26, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Steve Welch**  
**(702) 687-6300**

**SHARING TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES SUBJECT OF A.G.  
CONFERENCE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM MCDERMITT  
PRAISED FOR CREATING INTERNET PROVIDER FOR THEIR  
COMMUNITY**

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection will host a conference Monday aimed at finding ways to maximize the telecommunication resources available in Nevada. The "Open Network '98" conference is part of an effort by the Consumer Protection Bureau to actively address the telecommunications issue in Nevada through the development of a telecommunications services data base. The Bureau is also facilitating coordination among state agencies and local governments for these services.

Network Directors, Managers, and other representatives of state, county, and city governments, school districts, universities, colleges and non-profit community based services have been invited to this day long conference to share experiences, make new contacts, and develop a resource for sharing information regarding common issues, network design, availability and compatibility.

**OPEN NETWORK '98 WORKSHOP AND CONFERENCE**  
**MONDAY, JUNE 29, 1998**  
**9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.**  
**NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE BUILDING, ROOM 1214**  
**401 S. CARSON STREET, CARSON CITY**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will deliver the welcoming remarks beginning at 9:00 a.m.

"Exciting examples of how the networking of different technologies is changing the quality of life all over Nevada will be presented at the conference," Del Papa said. "The information superhighway has the

potential to create a divide between urban and rural communities in Nevada. The objective of this conference is to define available resources that can be shared to help provide this technology to every corner of our state. We also want to be as prepared for the future as possible."

At the conference, Del Papa will also praise the efforts of students from McDermitt High School who saw a need to expand their community's access to the Internet and decided to do something about it. With the help of their teacher and principal, the students decided to create their own Internet service company, the first of its kind in Nevada, and possibly the country. In order to help offset the cost of the satellite service needed to provide wireless Internet service, the students applied for and received a \$47,000 grant from the Northeastern Nevada Technology Consortium.

"These students are not only getting a valuable lesson on how to run a small business, their efforts will benefit other educators, businesses, medical providers, farmers and families in McDermitt and the surrounding communities who now have access to the valuable resources of the Internet without paying long distance charges," Del Papa said.

Cody Clayson, a student from McDermitt High School, as well as technology teacher Pat Goff and Principal John Modrell will attend Monday's conference in Carson City.

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection was asked by state legislators to conduct surveys to define the telecommunication services are available to meet the needs of all Nevada communities. The Bureau has hired a telecommunications engineer and a program outreach specialist to help rural Nevadans deal with the complex maze of discount programs and applications that are available for rural and low income customers.

"The Bureau is now equipped to play an important role in helping rural Nevadans identify, and take advantage of, new telecommunications technologies that can meet a wide range of needs, from consultation with a physician who is several hundred miles away, to Internet access for homes and school," Del Papa said.

For further information about the Nevada Open Network '98 conference, or the availability of telecommunication services in Nevada, please contact Steve Welch or Bob Cooper with the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection at (702) 687-6300.

June 26, 1998 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: Steve Welch (702) 687-6300 SHARING TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES SUBJECT OF A.G. CONFERENCE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM MCDERMITT PRAISED FOR CREATING INTERNET PROVIDER FOR THEIR COMMUNITY

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection will host a conference Monday aimed at finding ways to maximize the telecommunication resources available in Nevada. The "Open Network '98" conference is part of an effort by the Consumer Protection Bureau to actively address the telecommunications issue in Nevada through the development of a telecommunications services data base. The Bureau is also facilitating coordination among state agencies and local governments for these services. Network Directors, Managers, and other representatives of state, county, and city governments, school districts, universities, colleges and non-profit community based services have been invited to this day long conference to share experiences, make new contacts, and develop a resource for sharing information regarding common issues, network design, availability and compatibility.

**OPEN NETWORK '98 WORKSHOP AND CONFERENCE MONDAY, JUNE 29, 1998 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P. M. NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE BUILDING, ROOM 1214 401 S. CARSON STREET, CARSON CITY**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will deliver the welcoming remarks beginning at 9:00 a.m. (more) "Exciting examples of how the networking of different technologies is changing the quality of life all over Nevada will be presented at the conference," Del Papa said. "The information superhighway has the potential to create a divide between urban and rural communities in Nevada. The objective of this conference is to define available resources that can be shared to help provide this technology to every corner of our state. We also want to be as prepared for the future as possible." At the conference, Del Papa will also praise the efforts of students from McDermitt High School who saw a need to expand their community's access to the Internet and decided to do something about it. With the help of their teacher and principal, the students decided to create their own Internet service company, the first of its kind in Nevada, and possibly the country. In order to help offset the cost of the satellite service needed to provide wireless Internet service, the students applied for and received a \$47,000 grant from the Northeastern Nevada Technology Consortium. "These students are not only getting a valuable lesson on how to run a small business, their efforts will benefit other educators, businesses, medical providers, farmers and families in McDermitt and the surrounding communities who now have access to the valuable resources of the Internet without paying long distance charges," Del Papa said. Cody Clayson, a student from McDermitt High School, as well as technology teacher Pat Goff and Principal John Modrell will attend Monday's conference in Carson City. The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection was asked by state legislators to conduct surveys to define the telecommunication services are available to meet the needs of all Nevada communities. The Bureau has hired a telecommunications engineer and a program outreach specialist to help rural Nevadans deal with the complex maze of discount programs and applications that are available for rural and low income customers. "The Bureau is now equipped to play an important role in helping rural Nevadans identify, and take advantage of, new telecommunications technologies that can meet a wide range of needs, from consultation with a physician who is several hundred miles away, to Internet access for homes and school," Del Papa said. For further information about the Nevada Open Network '98 conference, or the availability of telecommunication services in Nevada, please contact Steve Welch or Bob Cooper with the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection at (702) 687-6300. ###

**STATE OF NEVADA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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June 25, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Victor Schulze**  
**(702) 486-3110**

**DEATH ROW INMATE'S FRAUD BACKFIRES**

The Attorney General's Office announced today that the Nevada Supreme Court has dismissed the latest appeal of death row inmate Patrick Cavanaugh, based upon Cavanaugh's submission of fraudulent documents designed to establish an alibi defense that he claimed his trial lawyer never explored.

Cavanaugh, age 53, was convicted in Clark County in 1984 for the April 7, 1980 slaying and mutilation of Nathaniel "Buster" Wilson. Wilson knew of Cavanaugh's involvement in a series of fraudulent schemes in Southern California. Over the course of several years, Cavanaugh unsuccessfully pursued two rounds of state court appeals and filed a federal habeas corpus petition before returning to state court claiming he had new evidence that his lawyers overlooked.

That evidence, mainly medical records generated at Martin Luther King Hospital in Los Angeles, was once believed to be so significant that state District Judge Jack Ames ordered a new trial for Cavanaugh. However, an independent investigation by the staff of CBS' television news show "60 Minutes" led to further investigation by the state. The investigation revealed that an employee of the hospital, Maurica Hawkins, had created false documents to substantiate Cavanaugh's post-trial assertions that he had been treated for hemorrhoids in Los Angeles and thus could not have been present in Nevada when Wilson was murdered. Hawkins, a county employee, was prosecuted by the Los Angeles County District Attorney for her role in the fraud. She pleaded guilty to conspiracy to obstruct justice. The state's investigation established that Hawkins was friends with another death row inmate, Cary Williams, who was convicted and sentenced to death in Washoe County.

When the state presented evidence of the scheme to Judge Ames, he reconsidered his earlier decision and concluded that Cavanaugh had attempted to perpetrate a fraud on the court by knowingly submitting false documentation to establish his main alibi. The judge also rejected other "newly discovered" alibi evidence that Cavanaugh had proffered, since the revelation of manufactured evidence cast doubt on the reliability of other testimony which was based on documents and not the independent memory of

witnesses. Cavanaugh appealed Judge Ames' decision to the State Supreme Court.

"We are pleased that justice has been done. As it happens in most cases, the truth finally prevailed. Thanks to an interested media outlet, and the combined efforts of both the Los Angeles County District Attorney and this office, Cavanaugh's attempt to take undue advantage of a system that protects the rights of convicted persons, even violent criminals, has been prevented," Del Papa said. "Cavanaugh's actions have already delayed the disposition of this case too long. Our office will continue in its efforts to ensure that the jury's penalty verdict is honored."

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**June 25, 1998 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: John Albrecht**  
**(702) 687-7332**

**LEGISLATORS APPROVE A.G. CONTRACT TO STRENGTHEN  
TOBACCO PROGRAM**

Carson City ... The Interim Finance Committee of the Nevada State Legislature approved a \$234,000 contract between the Attorney General's office and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration today. The contract will allow the Attorney General's office to enforce the FDA regulations prohibiting the sale of tobacco to underage youth by conducting additional inspections of retail locations which sell tobacco.

Federal regulations prohibit the sale of tobacco to children and require businesses to check the ID's of anyone under the age of 27 who tries to buy tobacco. The FDA contract will permit the Attorney General's office to hire investigators and support staff to supervise underage children who will assist in the inspections. Actual prosecutions of businesses which sell tobacco to children will be conducted by the FDA.

In addition, the Attorney General plans to consolidate the federally funded activities with state funds budgeted to strengthen enforcement of the Nevada state law by checking both over-the-counter and vending machine locations which are accessible to underage young people. All inspections will be conducted in a uniform method to assure fairness to the stores and staff who are subject to the compliance checks.

"This contract will allow the Attorney General's office to employ the staff who will conduct the next round of inspections and help to assure statewide uniformity in the manner the stings are conducted," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "All Nevadans can be proud of their part in the success of this program thus far. Retailers, law enforcement, media, public health agencies, public schools, and others have played a vital role."

In 1995 the Legislature gave the Attorney General the responsibility of conducting compliance checks to enforce Nevada's state law prohibiting the sale of tobacco to children under 18. Since that time, the "buy rate" for under age children has decreased. A 1994 study conducted by the Nevada Bureau of Alcohol



and Drug Abuse found that underage children were able to buy tobacco 63 % of the times they tried.

In 1997 a study conducted by the Attorney General's office found that the "buy rate" has decreased to 19.8 %. The Nevada Department of Education's 1997 Nevada Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that the percentage of students who smoked a whole cigarette before the age of 13 dropped more than 18 % and that regular smoking by high school students decreased by 6 % since 1995.

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**June 24, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: John Albrecht  
(702) 687-7332**

**TOBACCO INSPECTIONS CONTRACT BEFORE LEGISLATURE  
THURSDAY**

Carson City ... The Attorney General's Office will seek approval from the Interim Finance Committee of a \$234,000 contract with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration during Thursday's Committee meeting at the State Legislative Building. The contract will allow the Attorney General's office to enforce the FDA regulations prohibiting the sale of tobacco to underage youth by conducting additional inspections of retail locations which sell tobacco.

Federal regulations prohibit the sale of tobacco to children and require businesses to check the ID's of anyone under the age of 27 who tries to buy tobacco. The FDA contract will permit the Attorney General's office to hire investigators and support staff to supervise underage children who will assist in the inspections. Actual prosecutions of businesses which sell tobacco to children will be conducted by the FDA.

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**June 24, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Michael McCormick  
(702) 688-1818**

**PROSECUTORS' RECEPTION HONORS SENATOR RAGGIO**

The Nevada Prosecution Advisory Council (PAC) will host the first annual Prosecutors' Reception this Thursday evening, June 25, 1998 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at the National Judicial College in Reno.

Prosecutors from city, county, state, and federal agencies have been invited to attend and meet with members of the PAC, including the newly hired director, Michael McCormick.

The highlight of the reception will be the presentation of the first "William J. Raggio Prosecutors' Award." Senator Raggio himself will be the first recipient of the award, according to Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa, who chairs the PAC.

"Senator Raggio's entire career as a prosecutor and as a legislator has been devoted to public service," Del Papa said. "Senator Raggio has served as an outstanding role model for Nevada prosecutors at all levels of government and I am very pleased he is the very first recipient of this award named in his honor."

The PAC was established by the State Legislature in the 1997 session. The primary role of the Council is to provide training, education, and technical assistance to prosecutors throughout the state. The seven members of the PAC include Del Papa, Clark County District Attorney Stewart Bell, Carson City District Attorney Noel Waters, Mineral County District Attorney Brian Kunzi, Reno City Attorney Patricia Lynch, Boulder City City Attorney William Andrews, and Washoe County Sheriff Richard Kirkland.

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June 24, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Marta Adams**  
**(702) 687-5866**

**JUDGE FAVORS STATE IN STOCKWATER CASE**

The Attorney General's Office announced that Douglas County District Court Judge David Gamble issued an order today affirming a State Engineer's ruling which denied nine stockwater applications filed by the Bureau of Land Management. The State Engineer's ruling was based on a law passed by the 1995 Nevada State Legislature which requires that any applicant eligible for a stockwater permit on the public lands must be "legally entitled to place the livestock" on the public lands.

Although the BLM administers the public lands in Nevada, the State Engineer determined, based on an opinion of the Nevada Attorney General, that the BLM does not conduct livestock operations and cannot obtain a stockwater permit because it is not "legally entitled to place the livestock" on the public lands as is required by the state law.

The United States filed an appeal on behalf of the BLM, arguing that the law is unconstitutional as applied because it violates due process and equal protection rights as well as the intergovernmental immunities doctrine. The Attorney General's office countered these arguments by stating that the law is constitutional.

"We argued that the state's stockwater law is a legitimate exercise of the state's police powers in furtherance of the general welfare as defined by the state legislature," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "Today's court decision affirms the state's sovereignty over its water resources as well as the legislature's role in defining the general welfare."

Judge Gamble determined that the state's law was passed in response to BLM's Rangeland Reform and was enacted to assert state primacy over water and to protect the livestock industry. The court upheld the constitutionality of the law on all counts.

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**June 24, 1998 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Richard Linstrom**  
**(702) 486-3789**

**A.G. WARNS OF FAKE VIAGRA; REFUNDS AVAILABLE FOR  
PURCHASERS**

CARSON CITY - Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa today warned Nevadans about ordering substitutes for the popular impotence treatment drug, "Viagra." "Viagra" has been approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and is available by prescription only.

A firm headquartered in Georgia has been selling tablets with a similar pronunciation called "Vaegra." The firm has used the names "Institute of Sexual Research, Inc.," and "American Urological Clinic" to sell the phony drugs. These tablets were sold from a mail drop in Missouri and cost \$83.95 for a 75-day supply. The sales pitch included an article from "Newsweek" magazine about the real drug "Viagra." It appears that between 8,000 and 10,000 orders for "Vaegra" have already been filled nationally.

"The Missouri Attorney General's office has recently received a judgment which stopped sales of the fake drug and obtained nationwide restitution against the company," Del Papa said. "Fifty mail cartons filled with orders were seized. Consumers who paid for those orders are entitled to get their money back."

The Attorney General said that any Nevadan who may have sent in an order to these firms should direct their claims to: Missouri Attorney General, P.O. Box 899, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

"Our office appreciates the quick action by Missouri and the opportunity to alert Nevadans who may have fallen for the similarity in names," Del Papa said. "Consumers should consult their physician or pharmacist before ordering medications."

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**June 19, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Dorothy Nash-Holmes  
(702) 687-3533**

**INMATES INDICTED IN PRISON MURDER**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that four inmates of the Nevada State Prison were indicted by the Carson City Grand Jury on charges related to the January killing of prison inmate Steven Silva.

The defendants named in the indictment are: inmate Robert Ryan Rowland, age 40, of Los Angeles; inmate Tony Martin Smith, age 31 of Washoe County; inmate Richard Paul Irvine, age 32 of Clark County; and inmate Juan Pedro LaPeire, age 22 of Lander County.

According to the indictment, the defendants participated in the killing and robbery of inmate Silva on January 19, 1998. Rowland, Smith and Irvine each face murder charges as well as additional charges related to the robbery of Silva in his prison cell. LaPeire is being charged as an accessory to robbery.

The defendants are scheduled to be arraigned at 9:00a.m. on Monday, June 22, 1998 in Department 1, Carson City District Court.

An indictment is merely an accusation and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Copies of the indictment are available by contacting Bob Harmon of the Attorney General's office at (702) 687-3512.

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June 18, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Brooke Nielsen**  
**(702) 687-3511**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL REACTS TO U.S. SENATE TOBACCO BILL  
VOTE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said today that she was "very disappointed" that the United States Senate has thus far failed to pass comprehensive tobacco legislation.

"The negotiated settlement reached by the state's Attorneys General and the tobacco companies presents an historic opportunity to help improve public health in our nation," Del Papa said. "The proposed settlement achieves more for public health, faster and at less cost, than any other option available through our court case."

"The state's lawsuit against big tobacco remains in effect and is going forward," Del Papa said.

The Office of the Attorney General filed Nevada's lawsuit against the tobacco industry on May 27, 1997. Since that time, Nevada has settled with the Liggett and Brooke Group Companies and continues to pursue the case against the remaining tobacco companies. In April, 1998, former Washoe County District Judge Mills Lane issued a ruling which upheld the primary claims made by the state against those companies. The case is currently in the discovery phase and a trial date has not yet been set.

"Our state also continues to push forward on all fronts in cooperative efforts to prevent underage youth from purchasing tobacco products," Del Papa said. "Since 1995, the Attorney General's office has been responsible for enforcing state and federal laws which prohibit sales of tobacco products to minors. Since that time, there has been a dramatic decrease in the sale of tobacco to minors in our state. In 1994, a survey showed a 63% buy rate by minors. In late 1997, a statewide survey showed that buy rate has dropped to 19.8%. A recent youth behavior study conducted by the Department of Education also reflects a decrease in smoking among youth. The cooperation and training efforts of the retail industry and media public awareness campaigns have all contributed to these reductions"



The Attorney General's Office also recently signed a \$234,000 contract with Federal Food and Drug Administration which will fund 3300 additional inspections of over-the-counter retail outlets to enforce FDA regulations preventing the sale of tobacco to children under the age of 18.

In addition, the Attorney General plans to consolidate the federally funded activities with state funds budgeted to strengthen enforcement of the Nevada state law by checking both over-the-counter and vending machine locations which are accessible to underage youth. All inspections will be conducted in a uniform method to assure fairness to the stores and staff who are subject to the compliance checks.

Beginning in April, drivers under 18, and drivers between the ages of 18 and 21, who are obtaining a new or duplicate licenses have been issued licenses with different colored header bars. Nevada drivers under 18 have a light blue header bar across the top of their license with the words, "MINOR DRIVER UNDER 18" printed in yellow in the upper right hand corner. Nevada drivers between 18 and 20 have a yellow header bar across the top of their license and the words, "MINOR DRIVER UNDER 21" in red print. The primary purpose of this change in design is to allow people involved in selling or monitoring age-restricted products and activities, such as tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or gaming to more easily identify those who are underage. The distinctive new licenses will also help law enforcement officers easily identify juvenile drivers during an enforcement stop.

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June 17, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**  
**(702) 687-3512**

**"UPBEAT" PARENTS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR SUPPORT TO  
CHILDREN**

This Father's Day, the Attorney General's office and the Nevada Division of Child Support Enforcement would like to recognize and publicly thank non-custodial parents who have contributed to the millions of dollars of collected child support payments for their children. As in years past, it is important to publicize the fact that not all absentee parents fail to meet their child support obligations.

One such "upbeat" parent, Rulon Bracken of Fallon, recently wrote the following open letter to the non-custodial parent of children in Nevada. It truly captures the importance of support from absent parents:

"Children are asked to bear a great deal in the event of the divorce of their parents. They are often subject to hearing disagreements and disparaging remarks between their parents which they take to heart and sometimes believe they have caused. The hardship for a child can only be comprehended by someone who has lived through it. I was lucky my parents stayed together, but my children and step-children were not so lucky and have had to adjust to great changes in their lives. Child support does more than keep a child from living in poverty, it also lets the child know that he is still cherished and loved by the parent that no longer lives with him/her.

Besides supporting a child with money, it is extremely important to stay within close proximity so the child remains connected emotionally to the non-custodial parent and vice-versa. Many parents move their children to a different state and contact is severely diminished. This fosters a sense in both the parent and the child of disconnection, which seems to lead some parents to feel this child is no longer their responsibility. The money stops coming and the child feels even more abandoned.

Parents need to remember it is their spouse that they have divorced, not the child."

The staff of the Attorney General's office and the State Child Support Enforcement Program salute those

non-custodial parents who have maintained a valuable connection with their children and whose children remain a priority in their lives, both financially and emotionally.

A new pamphlet on "Tips for Collecting Child Support and Working with the Child Support Enforcement Program," is now available from the Attorney General's office. The pamphlet offers information to help answer questions such as who receives child support, how to collect child support and how child support is enforced in Nevada. Spanish language copies of this pamphlet will also be available.

Copies of "Tips for Collecting Child Support" have been distributed statewide and are available by contacting the Attorney General's office in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420, in Reno at (702) 688-1818 or in Carson City at (702) 687-4170.

Attached to this press release is a list of "upbeat" parents from throughout the state. The names were provided by the Child Support Enforcement programs of District Attorney offices. Each person listed has given us permission to publicize his/her name.

Whatever your news agency can do to help with the public acknowledgment of these individuals and the important role they play on behalf of the children of the State of Nevada would be appreciated by our offices.

#### FERNLEY/FALLON

- RULON BRACKEN,FALLON - CHURCHILL COUNTY
- MURRAY J. VANNESS,FERNLEY - MINERAL COUNTY
- TED CHAFFEE, FERNLEY - LYON COUNTY
- DANIEL WILLIAMS,FERNLEY - LYON COUNTY
- MICHAEL GAGNE,FERNLEY - LYON COUNTY

#### YERINGTON

- PHILIP REMALEY, YERINGTON - LYON COUNTY
- BRIAN PITTMAN, YERINGTON - LYON COUNTY
- DONALD BARTLETT, YERINGTON - LYON COUNTY

#### ELKO AREA

- DOYLE G. NELSON, ELKO - ELKO COUNTY
- KELLY BALOK, ELKO - ELKO COUNTY
- ROYD KAY BUNDY, ELKO - ELKO COUNTY
- LARRY DEAN HIRE, ELKO - ELKO COUNTY
- LUCIUS TJOA, ELKO - ELKO COUNTY

- SCOTT C. MADSEN, CARLIN - ELKO COUNTY
- JOSEPH M. BARTORELLI, ELKO - ELKO COUNTY

## LINCOLN COUNTY

- ORRIN B. DOTSON, PANACA - LINCOLN COUNTY

## LOVELOCK

- CURTIS SIEKERT, LOVELOCK - PERSHING COUNTY
- MARK STEPHAN, LOVELOCK - DOUGLAS COUNTY

## WINNEMUCCA

- EFRAIN GALLARZO, WINNEMUCCA - HUMBOLDT COUNTY
- TIMOTHY C. MORGAN, WINNEMUCCA - MINERAL COUNTY

## HAWTHORNE AREA

- JAMERSON FERRELL, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- MATTHEW D. LAUBOROUGH, WALKER LAKE - MINERAL COUNTY
- MIKE TRUSTY, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- CHARLES C. ZUNKEL, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- SCOTT BRUNNER, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- DAVE STRANGE, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- PERRY ROSE, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- ROBERT HOFERER, JR., HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- MERVIN E. ROBERTS, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- ALLEN R. WAGGONER, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- PATRICK BONSE, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- RAYMOND M. GUZMAN, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- ALBERT FORD, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- JERALD D. PETTY, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- WILLIAM R. HOLTON, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- MARC MACPHERSON, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- DALE MCNALLY, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- LANCE MORGAN, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- WAYNE A. SCHULENBERG, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- JAMES L. TAYLOR, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY
- WILBUR BLINCO, JR., LUNING - MINERAL COUNTY
- \*WANDA C. SELBACH, HAWTHORNE - MINERAL COUNTY

## CARSON CITY

- JAMES PIPER, CARSON CITY - LYON COUNTY
- MICHAEL PULSIPHER, CARSON CITY - DOUGLAS COUNTY

## GARDNERVILLE/MINDEN AREA

- LESLIE MCCROSKY, GARDNERVILLE - LINCOLN COUNTY
- FREDERICK PURDY, STATELINE - DOUGLAS COUNTY
- MICHAEL LAUB, ZEPHYR COVE - DOUGLAS COUNTY
- JOHN MACDONALD, STATELINE - DOUGLAS COUNTY
- PAUL MARTIN, GARDNERVILLE - DOUGLAS COUNTY
- STEPHEN ZAMPARDO, STATELINE - DOUGLAS COUNTY
- EDWARD SAXE, GARDNERVILLE - DOUGLAS COUNTY
- ROBERT SUGDEN, GARDNERVILLE - DOUGLAS COUNTY
- RANDY TURRIA, GARDNERVILLE - DOUGLAS COUNTY

## SPARKS

- NOBLE GABRIELSON, SPARKS - LYON COUNTY

## PAHRUMP/TONOPAH AREA

- RAY ALONZO, PAHRUMP - NYE COUNTY
- GARY WARD, TONOPAH - NYE COUNTY
- IVAN BROWN, ROUND MOUNTAIN - NYE COUNTY
- ROBERT WHITTINGTON, PAHRUMP - NYE COUNTY
- STEVE VALENZUELA, TONOPAH - NYE COUNTY

## LAS VEGAS AREA

- ALEXANDER HERNANDEZ, LAS VEGAS - DOUGLAS COUNTY
- LEONARD TINNELL, LAS VEGAS - DOUGLAS COUNTY
- CHESTER ADAMS, LAS VEGAS - CLARK COUNTY
- DANA ALLY, LAS VEGAS - CLARK COUNTY
- MICHAEL EASTMAN, HENDERSON - CLARK COUNTY
- ROBERT LOCKLIER, LAS VEGAS - CLARK COUNTY
- RANDY MEREDITH, LAS VEGAS - CLARK COUNTY
- WILLIAM STEVENS, LAS VEGAS
- JERRY VOHS, PAHRUMP - CLARK COUNTY
- DANIEL ROSE, LAS VEGAS - CLARK COUNTY

## RENO AREA

- STACY LINDER, RENO - WASHOE COUNTY
- RUBEN AUSTRIA, SPARKS - WASHOE COUNTY
- JAMAL AZZAM, RENO - WASHOE COUNTY
- JEFFREY BUSH, SPARKS - WASHOE COUNTY

**STATE OF NEVADA  
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June 15, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Anne Cathcart**  
**(702) 687-3541**

**DEL PAPA REACTS TO U.S. SUPREME COURT RULING**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said today, "the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Pennsylvania v. Yeskey* was not surprising, although certainly disappointing."

The U.S. Supreme Court held that, under a statutory construction analysis, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) applies to state prisoners. Nevada and Ohio filed an amicus (friend of the court) brief on behalf of 36 states and territories in view of the difficulties created for correctional administrators and the expensive burden imposed on the states by potential inmate abuse of ADA.

However, the Court specifically stated that it was deciding the case on the statutory construction issue and not the constitutional issues. The constitutional issues, raised on appeal by Pennsylvania, concern the Eleventh Amendment, the Fourteenth Amendment and the Commerce Clause but had not been preserved in the case at the lower court level. This leaves open the potential for the Court to grant a petition for writ of certiorari in an appropriate case where the parties have litigated the constitutional issues.

"Obviously, our state recognizes, supports and carries out the provisions of the ADA, but this legislation has had a severe and adverse impact for correctional management," Del Papa said. "States must already accommodate inmates with all types of physical and mental conditions under the Eighth Amendment. If abused, the ADA has the impact of enabling these inmates to obtain more benefits than any other type of inmate, and has the potential for costing state taxpayers millions of dollars for additional facilities and programs. If this does in fact happen, state legislatures may feel compelled to completely eliminate some rehabilitative programs which are not constitutionally required."

The inmate in the *Pennsylvania v. Yeskey* case was denied admittance to a boot camp program because he failed to pass the physical examination due to his medical history of hypertension. The boot camp program required all participants to engage in strenuous physical exercise.

"Unfortunately, this decision will in all likelihood encourage additional frivolous litigation by inmates," Del Papa said. "I also believe prison administrators must be able to make programming, housing and classification decisions based first and foremost on safety and security, without being second-guessed by courts as to whether these decisions do not meet ADA standards."



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Ronda Clifton**  
**June 12, 1998**  
**(702) 688-1835**

**RENO WOMAN MUST PAY RESTITUTION FOR DOUBLE BILLING  
AUTO INSURANCE CLAIM**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Francis Jabs, age 41 of Reno, was sentenced today in Washoe District Court for a charge of conspiracy to cheat or defraud an insurance company by unlawful or fraudulent means.

An investigation by the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit and the Special Investigations Unit of California State Automobile Association revealed that Jabs misrepresented information to California State Automobile Association Insurance Company which resulted in her receiving money from two insurance companies for damage to her car from one accident. She was only entitled to receive money from one insurance company.

As part of her sentence, Jabs was ordered to pay \$1,299.99 in restitution to California State Automobile Association Insurance Company by Washoe District Court Judge Steven Kosach.

"The concerted efforts of the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit and California State Automobile Association brought this matter to justice and demonstrate the important partnership between our office and private industry in the fight against insurance fraud in Nevada," Del Papa said.

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June 12, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Gregory Hojnowski**  
**(702) 486-3783**

**FORMER LAS VEGAS HEALTH CLUB OWNER INDICTED FOR  
INSURANCE FRAUD**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Arthur Jay Rosenthal, one time owner of AJ's Fitness Center of Las Vegas, was indicted by a Clark County Grand Jury on three felony offenses relating to insurance fraud. The indictment alleges that Rosenthal, along with Ronald Langer Rose of Encino, California, conspired to commit insurance fraud. Rosenthal and Rose are scheduled for arraignment at 9:00 a.m. on July 6, 1998 before Clark County District Court Judge Michael L. Douglas.

According to the indictment, Rosenthal had reported his 1988 Cadillac Allante, with the personalized license plate "SHAPEUP," was stolen from the Lake Mead Marina on July 22, 1990. Allstate Insurance Company paid \$37,931 to General Motors Acceptance Corporation, the leasing agency, as a result. A cooperative investigation between the National Crime Bureau, Allstate, the California Highway Patrol's Auto Theft Unit, the California Department of Justice, and the Nevada Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit revealed that Rosenthal had Rose come to Las Vegas and drive the car to his home in Encino where the vehicle remained until recovery pursuant to a search warrant executed December, 1994.

"The success of this investigation illustrates the continued cooperation between our office and private industry. Insurance fraud can only be stopped by partnership between law enforcement, business and private citizens. Every citizen in Nevada is affected by fraud through higher premiums. The message from the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit is insurance fraud will not be tolerated in Nevada," Del Papa said.

An indictment is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

**STATE OF NEVADA  
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**June 10, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**VIETNAM MEMORIAL WALL EXPERIENCE EXHIBITED IN RENO**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will participate in ceremonies honoring Vietnam Veterans as part of this weekend's exhibition of the "Vietnam Wall Experience" at Mountain View Cemetery in Reno.

The "Vietnam Wall Experience" is a 240-foot replica of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. The Wall will be on exhibit at Mountain View Cemetery 24 hours a day from Friday, June 12, at 9:00 a.m. through 8:00 a.m. Tuesday morning, June 16, 1998.

Attorney General Del Papa is scheduled to speak during a memorial program on Friday morning, June 12, 1998. The program will take place from 9:00 a.m. until noon and features various speakers as well as musical selections. Del Papa is scheduled to speak at 11:30 a.m.

Similar programs will be held at the exhibit on Saturday and Sunday.

For further information regarding the Reno exhibition of the "Vietnam Wall Experience," or if anyone wishes to volunteer with the set up and presentation of the exhibit, please contact Phederic Dold of Ross, Burke and Knobel Mortuary in Reno at (702) 323-4154. Dold may also be contacted on his cellphone at: (702) 762-0820.

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**June 8, 1998**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Dave Sarnowski**  
**(702) 687-3536**

**GALLEGO UPDATE**

The United States Supreme Court decided today that it would not review an appeal by convicted killer Gerald Gallego. Consequently, a cross-appeal by the State of Nevada seeking to overturn a decision by the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals will also not be heard by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court's decision means that the case will now go back to Pershing County for a new sentencing hearing.

Gallego was convicted in June of 1984 for the April 1980 murders of Karen Twiggs and Stacey Redican, and sentenced to death by a jury in Pershing County. After several unsuccessful appeal attempts in state court, on September 15, 1993 Gallego filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus in federal court raising 40 claims for relief. U.S. District Judge Howard McKibben denied all his claims and Gallego went to the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, which upheld Judge McKibben on all grounds except one issue regarding the executive clemency jury instructions. The Ninth Circuit determined that the jury was inadequately informed as to whether or not it was necessary to sentence Gallego to death in Nevada to ensure that he could not be released after serving only a relatively brief period.

Gallego appealed the Ninth Circuit's decision to the United States Supreme Court. The Attorney General's office submitted a cross-petition to Gallego's appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court. The state's cross-petition raised different issues than those raised by Gallego and would have given the state an opportunity to present its argument on the merits of this case to the U.S. Supreme Court, but only if the U.S. Supreme Court had accepted Gallego's appeal.

The state's initial appeal failed to make the U. S. Supreme Court's statutory deadline as a result of a decision made by the state's mailroom to send the state's Petition for Writ of Certiorari and supporting material by United Parcel Service rather than first class mail in the U.S. Postal Service. Immediately upon learning of the situation, the Attorney General's office filed a motion to the Supreme Court asking for an extension of time as the decision to mail by UPS was made by the state mailroom and out of the control of the Attorney General's office. That motion was denied.

"To say that the delay of justice in this case was caused solely by a decision on how to mail the original petition would be a misconception. Indeed, one must look to the entire death penalty appeals process and its impact on this case as well as many others nationwide," Del Papa said. "Since I became Attorney General for Nevada, I have strongly advocated at the national and state level for reforms of the all too long and complicated appeals process in death penalty cases. Progress has been made with the enactment of the Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act which was signed by President Clinton in 1996, but there is still much work to be done. Death row inmates should not be allowed to take advantage of technicalities having nothing to do with the substantive criminal process. It is time for our courts to recognize this and stop the abuse of the criminal appeals process."

"This situation is especially tragic when you take into consideration the nature of the Gallego case and the fact that Gallego has already made four trips up the appeals ladder, delaying justice for almost 14 years," Del Papa said.

Following Gallego's conviction and sentence to death in 1984, his direct appeal to the Nevada Supreme Court was denied in 1985. Gallego then requested the U.S. Supreme Court to review his case. That request was denied in 1986.

In 1987, he filed a state petition for writ of habeas corpus. That petition was denied by the Pershing County District Court and Gallego's appeal from that denial was denied by the Nevada Supreme Court.

In 1989, Gallego filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus in federal court. Because Gallego raised new issues which had not been decided on by the state courts, the petition was dismissed without prejudice to refile.

In 1990, Gallego filed another state petition for writ of habeas corpus in the 7th Judicial District Court in White Pine County. That petition was dismissed on November 18, 1991. Gallego's subsequent appeal from that denial was dismissed by the Nevada Supreme Court in 1992. He then requested a rehearing, which was also denied. Gallego then requested a review by the United States Supreme Court. That request was denied in May of 1993. Gallego then made his appeal to the Ninth Circuit.

In addition to the murder convictions in Nevada, Gallego was also convicted and sentenced to death by a California court for the November 1980 murders of Craig Miller and Mary Beth Sowers. His appeals in those cases are still pending.

**STATE OF NEVADA  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Ronda Clifton**

**June 2, 1998**

**(702) 688-1835**

**RENO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO PHONY INSURANCE CLAIM**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Marvin Hale, age 44 of Reno, pled guilty to one count of Conspiracy to Cheat or Defraud an Insurance Company out of Property by Unlawful or Fraudulent Means after submitting a phony document in support of an insurance claim to USAA Property and Casualty Insurance Company.

Hale made his plea this morning before Washoe County District Judge Janet Berry. Sentencing was scheduled for July 8, 1998. Hale faces up to one year in jail and a \$2,000 fine.

In July, 1996, Hale made a claim to USAA Insurance Company that he had paid for medical services for his wife following a car accident. A joint investigation by the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit and USAA's Special Investigations Unit revealed that, in fact, the medical services were never provided, or paid for, by Hale. Hale had turned in a phony receipt as part of his claim to the insurance company.

"This is a good example of how the growing partnership between private insurance companies and the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit is helping to deter insurance fraud in our state," Del Papa said. "Insurance fraud hurts every citizen in the form of increased premiums. Our office will continue with our increased efforts to bring those who fraudulently deal with insurance companies to justice."

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit will participate in an Insurance Fraud Summit sponsored by the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the Nevada Insurance Council scheduled to take place in Las Vegas on August 5, 1998. The conference will help to enhance partnerships in the fight against insurance fraud in Nevada.

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**July 30, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**NEVADA ESCAPEE LOCATED IN CALIFORNIA PRISON**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Nevada fugitive Joseph Carl Mancini, age 50, who walked away from a Southern Nevada Correctional Center work detail in 1987, was located today, serving time in a California prison under an assumed name.

At the request of investigators from the Attorney General's office, Mancini's fingerprints were entered into the Western Identification Network's Automated Fingerprint Identification System by the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles' Criminal History Records Repository.

"A search of seven western states identified him as an inmate in the California State prison at Corcoran where he was serving time for grand theft auto under the name of Richard Lobb," Del Papa said. Investigators from the Attorney General's office then requested the inmate's fingerprints from California to confirm Mancini's identity.

Mancini is expected to be extradited back to Nevada where he is serving a life sentence with the possibility of parole for sexual assault and grand larceny.

"This case is an example of how modern technology partnered with continued cooperation among regional agencies are making it harder for fugitives to hide," Del Papa said.

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**July 30, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Kevin Higgins  
(702) 688-1818**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL'S WORKERS COMPENSATION FRAUD  
UNIT CELEBRATES 5TH ANNIVERSARY**

This August, Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa would like to invite the public and the media to join her in acknowledging the 5th anniversary of the Attorney General's Workers Compensation Fraud Unit. During the past five years, the Unit has repeatedly demonstrated the effectiveness of fighting white collar crime as an anti-fraud unit and has received national acclaim for its efforts.

On August 13, 1998, press conferences will be held in Reno and Las Vegas to help recognize the Unit's accomplishments during the first five years. Attorney General Del Papa will be joined by the Unit's Chief Deputy Kevin Higgins, representatives from the state, including Doug Dirks, CEO of the Employees Insurance Company of Nevada, and representatives from other insurance companies. At that time, the media will be provided with videos from actual workers compensation fraud investigations. We also expect to announce several new anti-fraud initiatives and the Unit's 1997 legislative package, and how it intends to meet the needs of a three-way marketplace. We will provide more information on this press event later in the month.

"The cost of workers compensation fraud affects all of us," Del Papa said. "When someone accepts benefits while working another job, is out water skiing while on disability, or just not returning to work when they should, we all pay the price."

"Everything we buy, from a loaf of bread to a house, has the cost of workers compensation insurance built into the price. If a bakery's insurance premiums go up because of fraudulent claims, the cost is passed on to the consumer when the price of a loaf of bread goes up. If a medical provider extends treatment unnecessarily or charges for service he hasn't performed, the harder it is to pay for the majority of legitimately injured workers to be treated. The more fraud there is, the higher the premiums have to be raised to cover the costs. It's as if the fraudulent employer, medical provider or claimant was reaching right into our own pockets and stealing directly from us," Del Papa said.



In 1993, massive reforms of the State Industrial Insurance System were undertaken by the Nevada State Legislature. One of these reforms was the creation of the Workers Compensation Fraud Unit in the Office of the Attorney General. At that time, it had become evident that local District Attorneys did not have the necessary resources available to help them tackle the overwhelming amount of fraud which was crippling the system. As a result, the legislature created a unit dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of workers compensation fraud. The Unit is responsible for the investigation and prosecution of all workers compensation fraud committed in the State of Nevada by employers, employees or medical providers, against either the Employer's Insurance Company of Nevada or any of Nevada's self-insured employers. The Unit is also generally responsible for any fraud committed in the administration of workers compensation and is now the sole government agency responsible for such prosecutions.

Five years after its creation, the Attorney General's Workers Compensation Fraud Unit has helped to make the State Industrial Insurance System solvent and keep it operating in the black. Since 1993 the WCFU has reviewed over 4,414 complaints, made 398 arrests, sustained 339 convictions and generated cost savings to the State in excess of \$9.6 million.

Earlier this year, the Nevada's Workers Compensation Fraud Unit (WCFU) was rated as the best of its kind in the country by the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud. A study by the Coalition revealed that the Attorney General's Workers Compensation Fraud Unit presented more cases for prosecution and convicted more fraudulent workers compensation claimants and uninsured employers than any other such unit in the United States. The Unit had 104 criminal convictions in 1996, twice as many as the next closest state with such a unit, Texas, which only had 52 convictions.

"I am proud of the work of all the WCFU employees. They have rolled up their sleeves and really gotten the job done. I also appreciate the hard work of Chief Deputy Kevin Higgins, who has led the Unit since its inception." Del Papa said.

The Unit early on established a toll-free hotline for reporting suspected workers compensation fraud. Calls to the hotline have led to the successful prosecution of workers compensation fraud cases such as the recent conviction of a Reno woman who was running a bookkeeping business out of her home while collecting temporary total disability benefits from the Employers Insurance Company of Nevada (formerly SIIS). The hotline number is: 1-800-266-8688.

The Workers Compensation Fraud Unit has also increased efforts towards consumer education, public awareness, and the involvement of the business community in the eradication of fraud. A brochure for employers on the warning signs of workers compensation fraud has been prepared and widely distributed statewide. Copies may be obtained from any Office of the Attorney General, or [click here to view a copy](#).

For further information about the Workers Compensation Fraud Unit, please contact Chief Deputy Kevin Higgins in Reno at (702) 688-1818.



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**July 27, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**A. G./FDA KICK OFF TOBACCO ENFORCEMENT MEDIA  
CAMPAIGN KIDS DISTRIBUTE INFORMATION KITS TO STORES**

This week Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration will kick off a month long media campaign in the Las Vegas area aimed at reducing tobacco sales to children under the age of 18. The \$100,000 campaign is funded by the FDA and includes radio, billboard, and newspaper ads.

On Tuesday, July 28, 1998, high school students will distribute FDA merchant kits to Las Vegas area businesses. These kits include in-store signs to remind sales staff of the federal law requiring them to check the ID of anyone under the age of 27 attempting to buy tobacco.

**MEDIA WISHING TO OBSERVE STUDENTS DELIVERING MERCHANT KITS SHOULD MEET AT: 12 NOON, TUESDAY, JULY 28, 1998, AT THE AM/PM STORE, 3415 RUSSELL ROAD (AT PECOS), LAS VEGAS Telephone number is: (702) 454-8204. Store manager is Jack Hughes.**

**OR**

**12 NOON TUESDAY, JULY 28, 1998, GREEN VALLEY GROCERY, 2599 WIGWAM PARKWAY, HENDERSON. Telephone number is: (702) 361-3536, manager is Rhonda Scott.**

On Wednesday, July 29th, Del Papa will be joined by Judith Wilkenfeld, a Special Advisor to acting FDA Commissioner Dr. Michael Friedman, and the students who delivered the merchant kits, for speeches and a press conference to kick-off the media campaign. The speeches will be given during a conference of Nevada substance abuse counselors and administrators being held at the Tropicana Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEDIA CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF: WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 1998, 10:30 A.**

M., NEVADA BUREAU OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE SUMMER SCHOOL, CONVENTION CENTER, TROPICANA HOTEL, LAS VEGAS.

"This media campaign is another step to assure fairness to the Nevada businesses and sales staff which sell tobacco," Del Papa said. "Continued communication with businesses will help assure they know our FDA inspection program is about to begin."

In March, the Attorney General's office announced a contract with the FDA which will lead to 3300 new inspections of over-the-counter retail outlets to enforce the FDA regulations prohibiting the sale of tobacco to underage children. Federal regulations prohibit the sale of tobacco to children and require businesses to check the ID of anyone under the age of 27 who tries to buy tobacco. The FDA contract will permit the Attorney General's office to hire investigators and support staff to supervise underage children who will assist in the inspections. Actual prosecution of businesses which sell tobacco to children will be conducted by the FDA.

In addition, the Attorney General plans to consolidate the federally funded activities with state funds budgeted to strengthen enforcement of the Nevada state law by checking both over-the-counter and vending machine locations which are accessible to underage children. All inspections will be conducted in a uniform method to assure fairness to the stores and staff who are subject to the compliance checks.

In 1995 the Legislature gave the Attorney General the responsibility of conducting compliance checks to enforce Nevada's state law prohibiting the sale of tobacco to children under 18. Since that time, the "buy rate" for underage children has decreased. A 1994 study conducted by the Nevada Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse found that underage children were able to buy tobacco 63 percent of the times they tried. In 1997, a study conducted by the Attorney General found that the buy rate has decreased to 19.8 percent. This is confirmed by the Nevada Department of Education's 1997 Nevada Youth Risk Behavior Survey which found that the percentage of students who smoked a whole cigarette before the age of 13 dropped more than 18 percent, and that regular smoking by high school students decreased by 6 percent since 1995.

"All Nevadans can be proud of their part in the success of this program. Retailers, law enforcement, media, public health agencies, public schools, and others have played a vital role," said Del Papa. As part of the state's efforts, Del Papa encouraged stores to continue to train their sales staff on when and how to check ID's of young people buying tobacco and to refuse to sell tobacco to children under 18. Several direct mailings have been sent to all tobacco retailers reminding them of the law and asking the retailers to take steps to assure tobacco is not sold to underage children.

In 1996, over 2400 video and audio training kits were mailed directly to retailers who sell tobacco. This year, tests for clerks were mailed to retailers statewide who were asked to have their staff take the test as part of a review of the federal and state laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco. More than 90 % of the sales staff responding got 90 % or more of the answers correct. The average score was 91 % correct.

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July 24, 1998

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Matthew Gabe**

**(702) 486-3128**

**LAS VEGAS MAN ARRESTED FOR INVESTMENT SCAM**

Las Vegas - Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Hai Pia Nguyen, age 23, of Las Vegas, has surrendered to investigators from the Attorney General's Office on charges related to a scam involving thousands of dollars invested in Environmental Solutions Enterprise, a purported "environmental awareness" company.

According to a 8 count felony indictment filed by the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection, Hguyen told prospective investors that Environmental Solutions Enterprise was a corporation which distributed environmental products, such as vitamins and air filters.

The Indictment alleges that the Defendant committed securities fraud and obtaining money under false pretenses by misrepresenting, among other things, to perspective investors a monthly return of 10% over a period of six months. It is further alleged that the Defendant failed to disclose material facts to perspective investors, such as that the securities were not registered with the Nevada Secretary of Sate, Securities Division and that the Defendant was not licensed with the State as a broker-dealer and/or sales representative. The charges were the result of an investigation conducted by the Secretary of State Securities Division.

If convicted on the charges of Securities Fraud, Offer or Sale of an Unregistered Security, Transacting Business as an Unlicensed Broker-Dealer and/or Sales Representative, and Obtaining Money Under False Pretenses, Hguyen faces up to 50 years in state prison and fines. In addition to these penalties, he will also be ordered to pay restitution to the investors.

A criminal complaint is merely an accusation. The Defendant should be presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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**July 24, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Jan Murray  
(702) 486-3433**

**DAUGHTER INDICTED FOR CASHING DECEASED MOTHER'S  
DISABILITY CHECKS**

Las Vegas -- Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Angela Marie Hasty-Andis, age 27 of Las Vegas, has been indicted by a Clark County Grand Jury on insurance fraud charges for cashing disability checks issued to her mother after her mother's death. Andis faces four counts of felony insurance fraud and one count of obtaining money under false pretenses. If convicted, Andis faces a possible sentence of up to 34 years in the Nevada State Prison along with restitution payments and fines.

Andis' mother, Patricia Ann Hasty of Las Vegas, passed away on September 15, 1997. According to the indictment, one week after her mother's death Andis called the Professional Insurance Corporation, posing as her mother and asking Professional Insurance to change the location for payment of the disability checks to Andis' address in Las Vegas.

Three payments were issued to Andis after the death of her mother for a total of \$3,600 before the fraud was revealed.

Andis' current whereabouts are unknown and an arrest warrant is outstanding. Anyone with information regarding Angela Marie Andis should call the Insurance Fraud Hotline at 1-800-266-8688.

An indictment is merely an allegation. The defendant is presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law.

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**July 24, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Rayna Brachmann  
(702) 688-1964**

**DEL PAPA VOICES SUPPORT FOR GUIDELINES TO PREVENT  
UNFAIR COMPETITION AMONG AIRLINES**

Reno--Nevada Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa has joined 23 other state attorneys generals in supporting guidelines proposed by the Department of Transportation (DOT) which will define unfair methods of competition that have been used by major airlines to drive smaller, low fare, airlines out of business in particular markets. The guidelines for enforcement by DOT make no effort to re-regulate the airline industry, rather they will apply only in situations where unfair practices are used to drive low fare airlines out of a particular market.

The unfair methods cited by the DOT include cases where a larger airline will take a substantial short-term revenue reduction in certain markets in order to force a smaller airline to withdraw from that market. When the major carriers once again control the market, they raise their rates and oftentimes increase their original rates in order to recoup their losses.

In their comments, the attorneys general use Reno Air as one of several examples of small, low fare airlines being subjected to unfair, exclusionary practices by a major airline. According to the comments, when Reno Air attempted to establish a non-stop flight between Reno and Minneapolis in April of 1993, Northwest Airlines entered the market on the same day, matching Reno Air's low fares. Two days later, Northwest announced connecting flights from Reno to Los Angeles, San Diego and Seattle, covering all of Reno Air's other major routes. Northwest dramatically lowered fares from Minneapolis to other west coast cities, attacking Reno Air's connecting traffic through Reno. Northwest operated 26 flights to these markets compared to Reno Air's three flights. When Reno Air discontinued the Minneapolis service, Northwest returned fares to the previous levels.

"As a tourist destination, Nevada has a particular interest in making sure that air travelers are receiving the full benefits of fair and effective competition," Del Papa said. "Markets where competition is absent typically have airfares forty-percent higher than comparable markets where competition exists. Adoption

of these guidelines should benefit any consumer who flies by plane."

Under the proposed guidelines, DOT will determine whether the airlines have engaged in unfair exclusionary practices on a case-by-case basis and, if so, the offending airline will be subject to substantial civil penalties.



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July 17, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**  
**(702) 687-3512**

**A.G. SEEKS APPLICANTS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE GRANTS**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa is seeking applicants for grants made available to the State of Nevada under the STOP Violence Against Women program. The U.S. Department of Justice has awarded \$1,145,000.00 to the Office of the Attorney General to assist qualified programs meeting the specific federal and state objectives of the STOP Violence Against Women program.

The Attorney General's Office applied for the STOP (Service - Training - Officers - Prosecution) Grant to help Nevada's efforts to encourage the development and implementation of effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women, as well as the development and enhancement of victim services in cases involving crimes against women. STOP subgrants will be equitably distributed throughout the State of Nevada on a geographic basis including rural areas of various size and population. Law enforcement, prosecution, the courts, victim services agencies and tribal entities are encouraged to apply. Applicants must be a public service agency, tribal government or non-profit corporation incorporated and qualified to do business in Nevada. By federal law, 25% of these funds must go to law enforcement, 25% to prosecution, 25% to victim services, and 25% are discretionary.

Del Papa, who chairs Nevada's Domestic Violence Prevention Council, said that priority will be given to areas showing the greatest need, based on the availability of existing domestic violence and sexual assault programs in the population and geographic area to be served in relation to the availability of such services in other populations and areas. Priority will also be given to services for underserved populations including elderly, disabled and minority victims, as well as geographically isolated victims and those victims who are isolated for reasons such as homelessness or drug or alcohol dependence.

Applications are due by August 30, 1998 for the funding period of October 1, 1998 to January 31, 2000. Requests for application kits may be made by contacting Debbie Gyger, Office of the Attorney General, at (702) 684-8292.

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July 17, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**  
**(702) 687-3512**

**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
**DEL PAPA TO PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSION ON IMPROVING  
CARE AT THE END OF LIFE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa will participate in a panel discussion on state initiatives for end-of-life care Tuesday, July 21, 1998, during a session of the annual meeting of the National Conference of State Legislatures in Las Vegas. The purpose of the discussion is to explore legislative options and barriers to improving end-of-life care.

**PANEL DISCUSSION ON END-OF-LIFE CARE**  
**MEETING OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES**  
**TUESDAY, JULY 21, 1998**  
**2:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.**  
**LAS VEGAS CONVENTION CENTER**

The Attorney General's office formed the Task Force on Death with Dignity and Caring in Nevada in February, 1997. The Task Force wrote a plan for action which explores better ways to make end-of-life decisions less complicated and more compassionate for patients and families. One of the goals set out by this Task Force was to encourage conversation and learning in our communities about end-of-life issues. This conference is another step toward this goal.

For further information please contact Bob Harmon with the Attorney General's office in Carson City at (702) 687-3512 .

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**July 16, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Marilyn Skibinski  
(702) 687-6300**

**CONSUMER PROTECTION GUIDE ON CRAMMING NOW  
AVAILABLE FROM A.G.**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection has prepared a consumer protection guide on phone cramming. Cramming is the illegal practice of placing charges for unauthorized services on a consumer's telephone bill.

"Our office is very concerned with the increasing number of consumers who have contacted us regarding charges on their phone bill for services they have not authorized," Del Papa said. "This consumer protection pamphlet was prepared to help increase public awareness of Cramming as well as provide tips and guidance for consumers."

The Attorney General's pamphlet, *Cramming...What Can You Do?*, offers tips to help consumers avoid being Crammed, discusses the rights of consumers and explains what to do if consumers discover unauthorized charges on their phone bill.

To obtain a copy of the pamphlet, *Cramming...What Can You Do?*, consumers may contact the office of the Attorney General in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420, in Reno at (702) 688-1818 or in Carson City at (702) 687-6300. Copies may also be obtained from the Attorney General's Public Information Officer, Bob Harmon at (702) 687-3512.

**MEDIA ATTACHMENT: A COPY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THE CRAMMING BROCHURE IS BEING FAXED ALONG WITH THIS RELEASE. MEDIA WISHING TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL COPIES FOR DISTRIBUTION ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT BOB HARMON AT (702) 687-3512.**

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July 14, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Brooke Nielsen**  
**(702) 687-3511**

**PRESS ADVISORY - - TOBACCO UPDATE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa met with a majority of the nations Attorneys General today to discuss in great detail the status of the tobacco litigation and negotiations. Apparently, in response to court ordered mediation in the State of Washington, several states, including Washington, New York and California, among others, have resumed negotiations with the tobacco industry.

As part of the summer meeting of the Conference of Western Attorneys General and National Association of Attorneys General in Durango, Colorado this week, meetings were held to discuss the status of the tobacco litigation.

As of today, no formal offer has been made. However, significant non-economic terms along with certain economic terms reflected in the landmark June 20, 1997 agreement between attorneys general and the tobacco industry, were preliminarily discussed.

The non-economic terms include, but are not limited to, bans on: billboard advertising; non-tobacco merchandising; promotion of tobacco products in movies; promotion of tobacco products at sporting events; further disclosure on the adverse health affects of smoking; lobbying restrictions; dissolution of the Council for Tobacco Research; and additional document disclosure, among other things.

"As a minimum, the economic terms track the originally projected allocations which were developed as a result of the June 20th agreement and in all likelihood could go beyond that. If a settlement is reached, Nevada could receive in excess of \$894 million over the next 25 years," Del Papa said by phone from Durango.

No concessions on civil liability are on the table.

"With 37 days left to go in Congress we are still hopeful for a national resolution," Del Papa said.

"However, in the event that that does not happen the states need to push forward to achieve their goals. As we have always said, the states expect to gain more on behalf of the important issue of public health through a negotiated settlement."

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**July 13, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa is attending the joint summer meetings of the Conference of Western Attorneys General and the National Association of Attorneys General in Durango, Colorado.

An executive session on a tobacco settlement for litigating states has been scheduled for Tuesday afternoon along with other tobacco-related meetings.

A major focus of the plenary sessions will be public lawyering and education, in addition to public lands issues. On Wednesday, a look at school violence in Pearl, Mississippi - the incident and the aftermath - will be presented.

On another note, Attorney General Del Papa has been given the following assignments within the National Association: Chair of the Gaming Working Group; Co-chair of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act Task Force; and Chair of the Violence Against Women Prevention Subcommittee of the Criminal Law Committee.

Del Papa has often been recognized for her leadership in fighting frivolous inmate lawsuits. She also chairs Nevada's Domestic Violence Prevention Council.

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July 9, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Jane Femiano**  
**(702) 486-3782**

**BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION WINS LAWSUIT AGAINST  
PYRAMID SCHEME PROMOTER**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that her office has obtained Summary Judgment against Kenneth Wheaton, of Las Vegas, for his participation in an illegal pyramid scheme. Clark County District Court Judge Gene Porter ordered Wheaton to pay to the State of Nevada a \$10,000 civil penalty.

Judge Porter also enjoined Wheaton from ever participating in another illegal pyramid scheme and ordered him to pay attorney's fees to the Office of the Attorney General.

In 1996, the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection filed a total of fifteen lawsuits against fifty-seven defendants for their participation in a pyramid scheme known as Co-Opportunities International. To date, most of the named defendants have settled and paid a penalty to the state for their participation. Following the judgment in the Wheaton case, only three of the fifteen lawsuits are still in litigation.

Promoters of the scheme commonly described it as a "social club" or "gift club" where participants could exchange their talents and ideas with each other. To become a member, new recruits were required to make a "gift" of \$2,000 in cash to a "resource chair." Once the "resource chair" received \$16,000 in "gifts" from eight new members, he was to leave that position and the pyramid was divided. New members then moved up a level and were required to recruit two more new members in an effort to delay the inevitable collapse of the pyramid.

Attorney General Del Papa reminds all Nevadans that pyramids are illegal because they are inherently fraudulent.

"Based on the math, the pyramid must collapse quickly and only a very few people receive any money.

The majority of the participants are guaranteed to lose their money," Del Papa said.



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**July 9, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Richard Linstrom  
(702) 486-3789**

**A.G. FILES CRIMINAL CHARGES IN ESQUIRE POOLS CASE**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection has filed criminal charges against the owners of a defunct Las Vegas swimming pool company who failed to complete construction of pools sold to a dozen Las Vegas residents.

Former Las Vegas residents Charles Noll, age 61, Jean Arnold, age 63, and Lisa Marie Noll, age 32, have been charged in a Complaint filed with Las Vegas Justice Court with twelve counts each of Engaging in A Deceptive Trade Practice. Justice of the Peace William D. Jansen set cash bail at \$300,000 for each defendant.

Charles Noll and Arnold, along with their daughter Lisa Marie Noll, owned and operated the defunct Esquire Pools, Inc., located at 3051 East Sunset Road, Las Vegas. The Attorney General's complaint alleges that the defendants failed to complete construction of twelve swimming pools between July 10, 1997 and January 20, 1998.

On February 11, 1998, the Nevada State Board of Contractors suspended Esquire's contractor's license. Subsequently, the license has been revoked.

If convicted, the defendants each face a maximum of six months in jail and a \$1,000.00 fine on each of the twelve counts. In addition, state law requires that if convicted, the defendants must be ordered to make restitution to their victims and pay for the costs of their extradition, if any.

The current whereabouts of the defendants is unknown. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3769, or in Carson City at (702) 687-6300.

As in all criminal cases, the charges against are only allegations and the defendants are considered

innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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**July 8, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Jo Anne Gibbs  
(702) 486-3129**

**ATTORNEYS GENERAL SETTLEMENT PROTECTS COLLEGE  
BOUND CONSUMERS**

High school seniors and college students who purchased "Campus Cards" from a company called the National College Registration Board (NCRB), based in Princeton, New Jersey, will receive refunds under a settlement agreement negotiated by 36 states, including Nevada, Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today.

According to the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection, NCRB sent mail solicitations to approximately 1.8 million high school seniors nationwide offering a college student ID card called the "Campus Card" for \$25.00. The company also promoted sales over the Internet. Nevada and the other states alleged NCRB misled students into believing that the schools they would attend required them to purchase its "Campus Card." Also, the states alleged, the company implied to students that the cards would serve as their official identification cards at several colleges and universities. In fact, NCRB did not have the endorsement of any university or college. NCRB also told students that the cards would make them eligible for discounts on textbooks and other items.

Under the terms of the agreement reached with the states Attorneys General, NCRB agreed to immediately cease and desist from mailing solicitations for purchase of the "Campus Card," remove their Internet website, and comply with state consumer protection laws.

In addition, approximately 2700 students or their parents, who paid a cumulative total of \$67,025 for "Campus Cards" nationwide, will receive refunds from their state Attorneys General within the next few weeks. Approximately 3100 individuals who sent checks that were not cashed will have their uncashed checks returned.

"Parents and students are advised to contact their college administration office if they have questions about what items students will need before enrolling," Del Papa said. "Don't be misled by solicitations

offering products of little or no value or use to the student."

So far, a total of 16 victims have been identified in Nevada. If you have questions regarding NCRB and the "Campus Card," contact the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection in Las Vegas at (702) 486- 3194, in Reno at (702) 688-1818 or in Carson City at (702) 687-6300.

The other states participating in the NCRB settlement are:

Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

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July 8, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Tim Terry**  
**(702) 687-4729**

**NURSING HOME WORKER SENTENCED FOR EMBEZZLEMENT**

The Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit announced that Deneil Rae Townsend, a social worker employed at a Reno nursing home, was sentenced today for one felony count of Embezzlement. Townsend, age 45 of Sparks, was ordered to make restitution in the amount of \$10,000 and received a 32-month prison sentence from Washoe County District Judge Peter I. Breen. The prison sentence was suspended and Townsend was placed on probation for 36 months.

On May 22, 1998, Townsend pled guilty to one felony count of Embezzlement. Her guilty plea was the result of an investigation conducted by the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

"Townsend used her position at the nursing home to embezzle funds from patient trust accounts, then used those funds to purchase personal items for herself," according to Tim Terry, Director of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

"The calculated theft of nursing home residents' trust funds by a licensed social worker is unconscionable," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "This conviction should send a loud and clear message that such conduct will be severely dealt with by our Medicaid Fraud Control Unit."

Anyone suspecting the financial or physical abuse of a nursing home resident should contact the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit in Carson City (702) 687-4704 or, in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420.

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July 2, 1998

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Grenville Pridham**

**(702) 486-3788**

**ATTORNEYS GENERAL REPORT YEAR 2000 CONSUMER  
CONCERNS TO FTC**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa has joined today with other Attorneys General in submitting comments to the Federal Trade Commission regarding the various types of Year 2000 problems that consumers are likely to face.

The Year 2000 computer problem arose because computer software was originally written with only the last two digits designated to represent the year. Only two digits were used in order to save memory space. As long as all dates had "19" as the first two digits, there were no problems. However, when "00" is entered to represent the year 2000, computer software may recognize this to indicate the year 1900 instead of 2000. This could impact the operation of any computer that has date oriented data.

The FTC requested state Attorneys General to provide these comments as part of efforts to identify and solve problems which may arise. The Attorneys General have expressed their interest that the FTC use these comments to help develop a national standard of consumer protection measures to help consumers through any harm they might suffer due to Year 2000 problems.

"The total scope of the Year 2000 problem is, as yet, unclear. What is evident is the need for all consumer-related industries to identify possible problems and how they might affect the consumer," Del Papa said.

The Attorneys General told the FTC they are concerned about the current and future marketing of products that implicate Year 2000 issues. Particularly how manufacturers might use Year 2000 compliance as a selling point.

"If a manufacturer or service provider markets its product or service as Year 2000 compliant, it is incumbent on that company to ensure that the statement is true and not misleading," Del Papa said.

The Attorneys General's comments also noted three other principal areas of consumer products and services that might be impacted by the Year 2000 problem: software, electronics, and the personal financial services industry. Additionally, the Attorneys General believe all consumer-related industries, at all levels of the manufacturing and retailing process, should continue to evaluate potential consumer-related problems.

Manufacturers and service providers should continue their assessment of the consumer products they make, or services they offer, and whether they are likely to have a Year 2000 problem. Any date dependent product or service should be suspect.

Manufacturers and service providers should enhance the analysis of the possible remedies for fixing any identified Year 2000 problem and implement the most effective of these.

Manufacturers with consumer products already on the market should develop a policy and plan for notifying all consumers of problems and all possible remedies.

The State of Nevada has already taken a number of proactive steps to raise awareness of the scope and complexity of the Year 2000 problem. Under the direction of the Department of Information Technology, each state agency has established teams to identify and correct Year 2000 issues. An inventory and assessment of all computer systems and applications has been completed and plans for establishing compliance have been developed.

"The Year 2000 poses as one of the most significant challenges ever faced by the Information Technology industry and potentially will have an impact on all of us," according to Tom Loux, Year 2000 coordinator for the State of Nevada. "We are making every effort to meet those challenges and deliver the State of Nevada into the year 2000."

For more information on the state's efforts, please visit the Year 2000 Project Website: [www.state/nv.us/doit/y2k/](http://www.state/nv.us/doit/y2k/)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Bryant**

**August 31, 1998**

**(702) 888-7420**

**JURY FINDS STATE NOT LIABLE FOR ACCIDENT**

A Carson City District Court jury determined that the Nevada Department of Transportation is not liable for injuries sustained in a head-on auto collision which occurred in 1994 on U.S. Highway 50 near Ely. The unanimous verdict was returned in the court of Judge Griffin on Thursday, August 27, 1998.

In this case, the plaintiff contended that the accident occurred when the driver of another car attempted to pass a vehicle in a legal passing zone which, according to the plaintiff, contained a blind spot. The plaintiff claimed that NDOT was responsible for the accident because it allowed passing in the area.

Deputy Attorneys General Bob Bryant and John Lambert, who represented NDOT in this case, provided evidence that the accident actually was the result of the other driver beginning his pass in a no passing zone. The jury also heard evidence that the highway and roadway markings complied with all national and state design standards. This evidence helped make it clear to the jury that it was the driver of the other car, not NDOT, who was responsible for the accident.



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Creig Skau**

**August 28, 1998**

**(702) 687-3532**

**L & H EMBEZZLER SENTENCED**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that, following today's sentencing of former L & H employee Mary Ferris (a.k.a. Jane Treher), the Attorney General's office is filing a petition with the Las Vegas office of the U.S. Attorney to recover funds embezzled by Ferris from the state's Committee on Benefits.

Ferris, who pled guilty to charges related to the embezzlement of \$608,000 from the Committee on Benefits when she worked as a claims manager for L & H Associates, was sentenced to pay restitution to the State of Nevada and 49 months in federal prison by U.S. Court Judge Johnnie Rawlinson this afternoon in Las Vegas. Part of the sentencing includes forfeiture to the U.S. Attorney's Office of \$477,000 recovered from Ferris by the FBI with the assistance of investigators from the state Attorney General's Office.

The Attorney General's office is continuing to pursue legal action to obtain the remaining \$131,000 embezzled by Ferris from the Committee on Benefits.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jan Murray**

**August 27, 1998**

**(702) 486-3433**

**TIP LEADS TO ARREST OF SPAULDINGS IN COLORADO SPRINGS**

Las Vegas--Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Diana (Lady Di) Wiczek-Spauldning, and Ernest Neil Spaulding were arrested on Tuesday, August 25, 1998, in Colorado Springs, Colorado, after a tip to local authorities by a hotel employee. Nevada arrest warrants for the Spauldings were issued last Friday after they were indicted by a Clark County Grand Jury on multiple counts of felony insurance fraud, theft, and obtaining money under false pretenses. The Spauldings await extradition back to Nevada.

The Spaulding arrests are a direct result of the work of Colorado detectives and officers from the Gunnison and Colorado Springs Police Departments who worked with local hotel operators to locate the Spauldings who were reported to be staying in hotels and motels in Southern Colorado. The arrests culminate a year long investigation involving investigators and detectives from the Nevada Attorney General's Office, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and the National Insurance Crime Bureau.

The Grand Jury indictment alleges that the Spauldings conspired together and defrauded various insurance companies and people in the Las Vegas area. After purchasing a \$750,000 home in Las Vegas, the Spauldings insured the home with Fireman's Fund. Within four months, the Spauldings had made four claims against the policy, one for alleged wind damage. An investigation revealed that the wind damage claim was false. Neil Spaulding wrote multiple bad checks in an effort to induce the insurance company into continuing coverage. The same scheme was also played out against Chubb Insurance and California State Automobile Association. In all cases, the Spauldings hid their true claims histories from the companies when applying for insurance and misrepresented themselves and their business enterprises. The scheme was revealed when an agent discovered the previous coverage and claims and reported the suspicious activity to the National Insurance Crime Bureau.

Neil Spaulding operated ILEC, a laboratory equipment supply company, from the basement of the

couple's Las Vegas home. The investigation revealed that Neil Spaulding took deposits on equipment and never delivered. When that business failed, the couple made plans to turn the home into a bed and breakfast. The Spauldings quickly began advertising and taking reservation deposits. Diana Spaulding adopted the title of "Lady Di" in her business dealings. After eviction for failure to pay their house payments, the couple continued to take reservation deposits for the "Chateau Spaulding." When the Spauldings moved on to Palm Springs, California, they left more than \$100,000 in unpaid bills to creditors, employees and vendors.

If convicted, Diana Spaulding faces a possible sentence of up to 44 years in the Nevada prison system, restitution and fines, Neil Spaulding faces a possible sentence of up to 120 years in the Nevada prison system, restitution and fines.

An indictment is merely an allegation. The Spauldings are presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law.

If you have any information regarding the Spauldings, or any insurance fraud, please call the Insurance Fraud Hotline, 1-800-266-8688.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Matthew Dushoff  
August 26, 1998  
(702) 486-3195**

**NEVADA FUGITIVE ARRESTED AFTER APPLYING FOR JOB WITH  
CONNECTICUT POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced this afternoon that Nevada fugitive Alexander Ocasio was arrested yesterday in West Haven, Connecticut after applying for a job with the West Haven Police Department's training division.

Ocasio, who was wanted in the State of Nevada on charges of Obtaining Money Under False Pretenses and False Statements to Obtain Unemployment Compensation, applied for the job with the West Haven Police Department during the week of August 17, 1998. When conducting the background check, West Haven Police discovered the Nevada warrant and contacted the Nevada Office of the Attorney General.

In order to get the fugitive back to the police department and make an arrest, a representative from the West Haven Police Department called Ocasio, told him that they had made a mistake regarding his paperwork and needed him to come back to the police station. Ocasio responded that he did not have transportation, so the police sent someone to pick him up and give him a ride back to the station. Upon his arrival at the station, Ocasio was arrested under felony fugitive charges, was arraigned today, and now awaits extradition.

According to the Attorney General's complaint, Ocasio made false claims to the Employment Securities Division regarding his work status from March, 1996 through August, 1996. Ocasio complained he was not working and was therefore entitled to unemployment benefits when, in fact, he was working at the Sahara Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

As in all criminal cases, a complaint is merely an accusation and the defendant should be considered innocent until proven guilty by a court of law.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Marshall Smith**

**August 26, 1998**

**(702) 688-1977**

**GUIDELINES FOR NOTIFICATION OF SEX OFFENDERS  
COMPLETED  
INFORMATIONAL BROCHURE AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNITY  
ORGANIZATIONS**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that her Office is distributing copies of the adult and juvenile Community Notification of Sex Offenders Guidelines. The purpose of the guidelines is to assist law enforcement and related agencies in the enforcement implementation of new legislation related to community notification of sex offenders passed by the 1997 Nevada Legislature.

These guidelines, which now supercede previously issued guidelines, were prepared by the Attorney General's office and finalized after review and input from the state's Advisory Council on Community Notification of Sex Offenders. The Advisory Council is comprised of a seven member panel appointed by the Governor and the legislature. Members appointed by the legislature are Senator Ernest A. Adler (chairman of the council), Senator Mike McGinness, Assemblywoman Genie Ohrenschall, and Assemblyman Brian Sandoval. Members appointed by the Governor include former Nevada Division of Parole and Probation Chief Richard E. Wyatt, Mineral County District Attorney Brian Kunzi, and Clark County Assistant District Attorney J. Charles Thompson.

Senate Bill 325, which was passed in the 1997 legislative session, was built on previous legislation by requiring law enforcement agencies throughout the state to notify communities, under appropriate circumstances, of convicted sex offenders who reside in their neighborhood. Previous legislation required notification of only those sex offenders who were released on parole. The new legislation also allows for community notification of juvenile sex offenders who have been adjudicated delinquent for committing certain sex crimes or who have been convicted as adults.

The Nevada Division of Parole and Probation assesses offenders as having a low, moderate, or high risk of re-offending. That assessment is then sent to the local law enforcement agency. If the convicted sex

offender has been assessed at either the moderate or high level for potentially re-offending, the law enforcement agency will notify the community.

Copies of the guidelines are being distributed to all law enforcement and related agencies throughout the state. Copies are available to the public by contacting the Attorney General's office.

The Guidelines for Community Notification of Sex Offenders are also available on the Attorney General's Website at: <http://ag.state.nv.us/>

An informational brochure about Community Notification of Sex Offenders is also being prepared by the Attorney General's office. Copies of this brochure will be distributed statewide to non-profit organizations which provide services and programs for women and children to help them in understanding and obtaining further information on Community Notification of Sex Offenders.

Once completed, the brochure will be available on the Attorney General's Website. Copies may also be obtained by calling the Attorney General's office in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420, in Reno at (702) 688-1818 or in Carson City at (702) 687-4170.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jane Femiano**

**August 24, 1998**

**(702) 486-3782**

**LV BUSINESSWOMAN ARRESTED FOR CREDIT REPAIR FRAUD**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced that Kelly Geib, age 30 of Las Vegas, was arrested last Friday night by investigators from the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection for defrauding her credit repair customers. Geib is charged with six felony counts, including theft and bad check violations, in connection with her business, National Consumer Credit, Inc., a Las Vegas credit repair agency.

Victims complained that, after they gave Geib money to pay-off a debt and repair a bad credit report, Geib never forwarded the money to the victim's creditors. Additionally, some victims complained that when they demanded Geib refund their money, they were given a bad check.

Anyone considering the use of a credit repair agency should consider the following tips:

- Beware of companies that want you to pay for credit repair services before any services are provided.
- Beware of companies that do not inform you of your legal rights and what you can do yourself for free.
- Beware of credit repair companies that suggest that you try to invent a "new" credit report by applying for an Employer Identification Number to use instead of your social security number.
- Check with the Consumer Affairs Division (CAD) of the State Department of Business and Industry. All credit repair companies must be registered and bonded with CAD to operate in Nevada.

"No one can legally remove accurate and timely negative information from a credit report," Del Papa said. "Only time can heal a bad credit report."

As in all criminal cases, the charges against the defendant are merely accusations and the defendant is to

be considered innocent until and unless she is proven guilty in court.

If you suspect possible credit repair fraud, please contact the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3777, in Reno at (702) 688-1111, or in Carson City at (702) 687-6300. Consumers with questions about credit counseling may wish to contact Consumer Credit Counseling Services in southern Nevada at (702) 364-0344 or in northern Nevada at (702) 322-6557.



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Pam Howle**

**August 24, 1998**

**(702) 688-1828**

**NEVADA'S DEATH WITH DIGNITY TASK FORCE OPPOSES  
FEDERAL LEGISLATION THAT MAY IMPACT SERIOUSLY ILL  
AMERICANS SUFFERING SEVERE PAIN**

Nevada's Task Force on Death with Dignity and Caring has voted unanimously to oppose the federal Lethal Drug Abuse Prevention Act (H.R. 4006/S. 2151). The proposed legislation purportedly seeks to prohibit physician-assisted suicide by prosecuting doctors and pharmacists who dispense federally controlled substances for such a purpose.

"In the opinion of some noted national and state medical experts, the bill may actually harm seriously ill patients suffering severe pain by inhibiting the practice of aggressive pain medicine," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa, a member of the Task Force, said. "The Death With Dignity and Caring in Nevada Task Force does not support physician-assisted suicide but it was felt this legislation could greatly reduce effective end-of-life care and should not be passed."

Under the bill, if a patient's family, friends, or anyone else, allege that a physician has prescribed a controlled drug such as morphine with the "intent" of assisting a suicide, that physician may be investigated by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The DEA could then revoke the doctor's DEA registration, impose large fines, and possibly put the physician in jail.

This proposed legislation has raised concerns in the medical community because physicians might "err on the side of caution" and not prescribe these strong pain drugs or use less effective non-controlled substitutes. As a result, patients could suffer.

This measure is also opposed by the National Hospice Association, the American Medical Association, the National Health Council, as well as others in a growing list of organizations, associations, and coalitions.

Del Papa has also sent a letter to all other states' attorneys general requesting they review this legislation with organizations in their state which deal with end-of-life issues such as advance directives or pain management.

In August, 1996, a broad based task force was convened consisting of health care professionals, hospice workers, educators, patient advocates, representatives of the religious community, legislators and others. One of the purposes of this group was to help improve care at the end of life. The task force, which was co-chaired by Barbara Thornton, Ph.D., Professor of Health Sciences at the University of Nevada, Reno and Thomas Scully, M.D., Director of the Ethics program at the University of Nevada School of Medicine, issued an Action Plan, Death With Dignity and Caring in Nevada which has since been widely distributed statewide and nationally. The recommendations contained in this report are designed to get more information to health providers, patients and their families which should help make the dying process much more humane. The Action Plan is a preventive effort, aimed at making death more understandable, less painful and a more peaceful process. The task force's mission was, and continues to be, improving management of pain in all areas and offering and encouraging more sophisticated and comprehensive public discussion.

For more information on this subject, or the Death With Dignity and Caring in Nevada Task Force, contact Pam Howle in the Reno office of the Attorney General at (702) 688-1818, or you may visit the Attorney General's website at <http://ag.state.nv.us/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Pike**

**August 19, 1998**

**(702) 687-3543**

**A.G. MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWING CONTRACTORS  
BOARD INVESTIGATION**

The Attorney General's Investigations Division announced today that it has completed an extensive investigation of the Nevada Contractors Board. While no criminal conduct was discovered, administrative shortcomings were apparent, and appropriate recommendations have been made.

Following interviews with numerous persons who made complaints against contractors and were dissatisfied with the lack of action by the Contractors Board, investigators concluded that problems with the board were in part due to the enormous growth in construction and in part due to procedures in place wherein referrals were not always presented to the Board.

Among other corrective actions, the new Executive Officer Marge Grein has revised investigative procedure guidelines and has established an investigative report checklist.

In order for the Board to work better with an industry which includes over 15,000 licensed contractors and an estimated 150 percent growth in construction over the last five years, the Attorney General's Office recommended the Board establish a tracking system/database for all incoming complaints. The Board needs to insure that complaints do not become "out of statute" and make quick referral of those contractors receiving complaints.

Further recommendations included the creation of procedural manuals; formal complaint forms; information packets for consumers; statistical reports; and formal hiring practices. The Attorney General's Office also recommended that the Board review its regulations and be able to review complaints the Executive Officer has deemed unnecessary for investigation.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jean Murray**

**August 19, 1998**

**(702) 687-6300**

**NEVADA'S ADULT LITERACY TASK FORCE SUPPORTED BY 7-11  
COIN DRIVE**

**INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY IS SEPTEMBER 8, 1998**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that statewide efforts to combat Nevada's adult low-literacy problem will receive additional support through a coin drive sponsored by the Southland Corporation. At the August 12, 1998 meeting of state's Adult Literacy Task Force, Southland pledged its support to literacy in Nevada through its "People Who Read - Achieve" countertop collection program at all 7-Eleven stores.

"Nickels, dimes and quarters can help make a difference for literacy in Nevada" said Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa. Del Papa, who helped form Nevada's Adult Literacy Task Force, encouraged Nevadans to donate to 7-Eleven's literacy collection program. The money collected is distributed only to programs or projects that help people learn how to read or improve on their reading skills."

The Attorney General's office was asked to assist with the organization of the Adult Literacy Task Force, in part, because the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection was directed by the state legislature to conduct a survey of telecommunication services. The goals of the survey include enhancing rural educational opportunities through greater access to telecommunications technology.

In May, 1998, Attorney General Del Papa called together community leaders throughout the state to develop an action plan. To improve literacy skills of adult Nevadans, the plan being developed has a special emphasis on the justice system, partnering with Adult Education programs.

"Low literacy is everybody's problem" says Vicky Ramakka, Ed.D., Nevada Department of Education. "Adults with low literacy skills directly impact Nevada's economic and social stability. Low literacy skills are correlated with unemployment, underemployment, poverty, being on welfare, crime, industrial

accidents and underachievement among children."

The Task Force is also discussing, and making recommendations to address, the low literacy rate in Nevada's Prisons based on the fact that 7 in 10 prisoners performed at the lowest levels of literacy.

International Adult Literacy Day is September 8, 1998. The Attorney General's Adult Literacy Task Force report will be released to coincide with literacy recognition events to be held in Las Vegas on September 10 and in Reno on September 25.

For more information, please contact the Nevada Literacy Coalition at: 800- 445-9673.

**STATE OF NEVADA  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**

**August 14, 1998**

**(702) 687-3512**

**DEL PAPA REACTS TO TOBACCO DECISION**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said this afternoon that she was, "very disappointed" with today's decision by a three judge panel of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals that stated the U.S. Food and Drug Administration does not have jurisdiction to regulate tobacco products.

Del Papa stated that Attorneys General nationwide have strongly supported FDA authority over tobacco products and included a provision to that effect in the comprehensive settlement agreement of June 20, 1998. "Today's decision should send a signal to Congress that there is a need to act on that agreement, which we believe would still be supported by the tobacco industry," she said.

"In Nevada, retailers, law enforcement agencies, and legislators have done much to prevent the sale of tobacco to children through enforcement, prevention, and public education efforts," Del Papa said. "The FDA regulations restricting sales of tobacco to underage youth help to support those efforts."

Del Papa noted that today's decision by the Fourth Circuit Court will not have an immediate impact on programs underway in Nevada.

"We understand the federal government has asked for an en banc rehearing of the decision," Del Papa said. "Our office will study the decision carefully and closely monitor the appeals process. In the meantime, we will continue our work to reduce the sale of tobacco to children in Nevada."

"This ruling will not have an impact on state lawsuits nor will they impact the Attorneys General's settlement discussions with the industry," Del Papa said.

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August 12, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Thomas Wilson**  
**(702) 687-3546**

**FIRST STATE INMATE HEARING BY VIDEO CONFERENCE HELD -  
ELY STATE PRISON CONNECTED WITH FEDERAL COURT IN  
RENO**

The first video-conference court hearing of a state inmate was held yesterday in the Reno courtroom of United States District Court Senior Judge Edward C. Reed. Judge Reed heard arguments in a federal civil rights case involving an inmate of Ely State prison. The prisoner appeared at the hearing via a video teleconference from the prison.

The video-teleconferencing of yesterday's hearing is the result of an ongoing, cooperative project between the Attorney General's Office, the U.S. District Court, and the Nevada Department of Prisons. The goals of the project include decreasing the financial burdens of inmate litigation on the courts and on Nevada, as well as decreasing the risk of inmate escape or violence during transport.

In order to help reduce the time and money required to transport inmates from remote prison facilities to court, hearings involving inmates with civil rights cases have been held telephonically in the past. However, there were difficulties with the telephonic hearings, including audio reception; inability of the parties involved, including the judge to observe the demeanor of the inmate or other witnesses on the call; and, the review of documents offered for admission into evidence..

"Video conferencing allows observation and communication by the judge, the inmate, the state attorney, inmate witnesses, and officer witnesses. In this way, technology has been used to save transportation and personnel costs, as well as protect the safety of the public," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "But even more important, there is always a safety risk, particularly when maximum security inmates from the Ely State Prison are transported to the most populated cities in our state for court hearings."

According to the State Department of Prisons, the cost for installing video telecommunication systems at

Ely State Prison and the Nevada State Prison in Carson City was \$125,000. Del Papa noted that the U.S. District Court received approval for federal funding for its portion of the project in 1996, then the Nevada Department of Prisons and the Attorney General's Office sought and received approval in the 1997 legislative session to fund the state's share of the project.



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**August 12, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: JoAnne Embry  
(702) 486-3154**

**A.G.'S OFFICE TO PROVIDE FREE CHILD I.D. PACKETS AT BACK  
TO SCHOOL FAIR**

The Attorney General's Missing Children Clearinghouse will provide free child identification packets during the 10th Annual Back to School Fair, Saturday, August 15, 1998, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Boulevard Mall, 3528 South Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas.

Hosted by the Boulevard Mall, Channel 3, and the Clark County School District, the Fair is an opportunity for new and returning students to gather information on a variety of important issues from school activities to child safety. The Fair is scheduled for both Saturday, August 15, and Sunday, August 16, 1998.

On Saturday, the Missing Children Clearinghouse will provide free parent resource packets which include fingerprint and photo identification as well as the Clearinghouse's brochure of safety tips, "A Guide to Child Safety." On Sunday, Nevada Child Seekers will provide child identification.

The Missing Children Clearinghouse will be among a variety of local law enforcement agencies and non-profit organizations that will participate in this year's event.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Kevin Higgins**

**August 11, 1998**

**(702) 688-1818**

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**PRESS CONFERENCE RECOGNIZES 5TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF ATTORNEY GENERAL'S WORKERS COMPENSATION FRAUD  
UNIT**

Why should we care about Workers Compensation Insurance Fraud?

"The cost of workers compensation fraud affects all of us," according to Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa. "When premiums go up because a company fails to obtain coverage or someone accepts benefits while working another job, or is out water skiing while on disability, or just not returning to work when they should, we all pay the price through higher prices for goods or services."

The 5th anniversary of Nevada's Workers Compensation Fraud Unit will be acknowledged during press conferences in both Reno and Las Vegas on Thursday, August 13, 1998.

Members of the media will also be provided with videos from actual workers compensation fraud investigations.

**RENO PRESS CONFERENCE**

**9:00 A.M.**

**OFFICE OF THE STATE BOARD OF ENGINEERS**

**1755 EAST PLUMB LANE, STE. 135**

**LAS VEGAS PRESS CONFERENCE**

**1:30 P.M.**

**GRANT SAWYER OFFICE BUILDING, SUITE 4400**

**555 EAST WASHINGTON**

Del Papa, and the WCFU's Chief Deputy Kevin Higgins, will be joined by State Senator Randolph Townsend, Doug Dirks, CEO of the Employees Insurance Company of Nevada (formerly SIIS), Jan Rhodes, Senior Vice President of Liberty Mutual, and others for the press conference. The press conference will review the Unit's accomplishments during the first five years, discuss the challenges of a three-way marketplace and introduce the 1999 legislative package.

"Certainly our ability to reduce policyholder premium rates by twenty-four and one-half percent was due, in part, to the Workers Compensation Fraud Unit's great strides in prosecuting offenders and recouping funds," said Douglas D. Dirks, CEO, Employers Insurance Company of Nevada.

"The contributions of the Fraud Unit over the last five years to the success of Nevada's workers compensation program are significant," Senator Randolph Townsend said. "The work of the Fraud Unit has had positive impacts on employers and employees, the Employers Insurance Company of Nevada and the overall economy of our state."

Early on, the Unit established a toll-free hotline for reporting suspected workers compensation fraud. Calls to the hotline have often led to the successful prosecution of workers compensation fraud cases. The hotline number is: 1-800-266-8688.

Over the last five years nearly one-half of the 5,000 cases investigated by the Fraud Unit have been for employers who have failed to obtain or maintain workers compensation coverage for their employees.

The Workers Compensation Fraud Unit has also increased efforts towards consumer education, public awareness, and the involvement of the business community in the eradication of fraud. A pamphlet for employers on the warning signs of workers compensation fraud has been prepared by the Unit and widely distributed statewide. In response to inquiries regarding the posting of personnel-related notices in Nevada workplaces, the Unit recently released an informational pamphlet for businesses which attempts to provide a comprehensive list of posting requirements. The pamphlet lists which postings are required by state or federal law, executive order, or regulation and provides employers information on how to contact the agencies which provide those postings. Copies of both pamphlets may be obtained from any Office of the Attorney General.

For further information about the Workers Compensation Fraud Unit, please contact Chief Deputy Kevin Higgins in Reno at (702) 688-1818.

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August 7, 1998  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Richard Linstrom**  
**(702) 486-3789**

**GENERAL ELECTRIC CORP TO REFUND CONSUMERS AND PAY  
STATES \$27.5 MILLION FOR IMPROPER DEBT COLLECTION**

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced today that Nevada is part of a nationwide \$27.5 million multistate settlement with General Electric Corporation (GECC) arising out of GECC's unlawful debt collection practices from consumers who had declared bankruptcy.

"Thousands of consumers nationwide were affected by the collection of invalid debts by GECC, including an estimated 700 or more consumers in Nevada," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "Figures are not yet available for the exact amount of Nevada's share of the settlement, but the state general fund is expected to receive approximately \$350,000 in civil penalties from GECC as a result of this settlement."

GECC issues and administers private label credit cards for several retailers, including Montgomery Ward, Home Depot and Levitz. A multistate investigation by Attorneys General confirmed that, for at least four years, GECC had solicited consumers who filed Chapter 7 bankruptcy to sign reaffirmation agreements. A reaffirmation agreement is a contract in which the consumer agrees to repay a debt rather than have it dismissed in bankruptcy. Reaffirmation agreements are valid only if they are voluntary and must be filed with the bankruptcy court. In certain cases, a reaffirmation agreement must be approved by the bankruptcy court. The attorneys general's investigation also revealed that GECC failed to file these reaffirmation agreements with the bankruptcy court.

Under the settlement, affected customers identified through a claims process, or by GECC (using a process overseen by the attorneys general), will have all their "reaffirmed" debt stricken and GECC will waive any rights to repossess the merchandise. These customers will also be reimbursed or receive credit for finance charges and penalties charged by GECC, and be reimbursed for any money paid on the reaffirmed debt, plus interest.

Those potentially affected customers not identified by a review of GECC's records will receive a notice and short questionnaire to determine if they are eligible to receive restitution.

GECC and Montgomery Ward have also agreed to an injunction that will prohibit them from collecting on reaffirmation agreements that were not properly filed and to accurately disclose to their bankrupt customers their rights in connection with reaffirmation agreements proposed by the creditor.

All 50 states are participating in this settlement agreement. The improper reaffirmation practices by GECC came to light when a multistate task force of attorneys general (including Nevada) investigated and settled with Sears for similar claims in 1997. Following that investigation, the attorneys general uncovered similar conduct by other major creditors including GECC and Montgomery Ward.

Persons who feel they are eligible for reimbursement from this settlement should contact the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3786, in Reno at (702) 688-1958, or in Carson City at (702) 687-6300.

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**August 6, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
(702) 687-3512**

**PERSONNEL-RELATED POSTING REQUIREMENTS SUBJECT OF  
NEW PAMPHLET AVAILABLE TO NEVADA BUSINESSES**

In response to inquiries regarding the posting of personnel-related notices in Nevada workplaces, the Attorney General's office has prepared an informational pamphlet for businesses which attempts to provide a comprehensive list of posting requirements.

Prepared by the Workers Compensation Fraud Unit, the pamphlet lists which postings are required by state or federal law, executive order, or regulation. Examples of information which must be posted in the workplace include emergency phone numbers, rights and benefits for those who are injured on the job, equal opportunity employment, and federal minimum wage standards. In addition, the pamphlet provides employers information on how to contact the agencies which provide those postings.

The pamphlet, "Personnel-Related Posting Requirements," is available by contacting the Attorney General's office in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420, in Reno at (702) 688-1818, or in Carson City at (702) 687-4170.

Throughout the month of August, Nevada's Workers Compensation Fraud Unit will be celebrating its 5th anniversary. During the past five years, the Unit has demonstrated the effectiveness of fighting white collar crime as an anti-fraud unit. Since 1993 the WCFU has reviewed over 4,414 complaints, made 398 arrests, sustained 339 convictions and generated cost savings to the State in excess of \$9.6 million. The Unit has received national acclaim for its efforts.

"Certainly our ability to reduce policyholder premium rates by twenty-four and one-half percent was due, in part, to the Workers Compensation Fraud Unit's great strides in prosecuting offenders and recouping funds," said Douglas D. Dirks, CEO, Employers Insurance Company of Nevada (formerly SIIS).

Any suspected workers compensation fraud should be reported to the Unit on its toll-free fraud hotline at 1-800-266-8688.

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**September 30, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Jo Anne Embry  
(702) 486- 3154 or 486-3539**

**NEVADANS ASKED TO OBSERVE OCTOBER AS NATIONAL  
CRIME PREVENTION MONTH**

Las Vegas -- In observance of the 14th annual National Crime Prevention Month, the Attorney General's Missing Children Clearinghouse & Crime Prevention Unit announced today the availability of new "Crime Prevention Month Action Kits." The kit, produced by the National Crime Prevention Council in a cooperative effort with the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance, contains tips for individuals, community organizations, law enforcement, and schools to help plan crime prevention events in their communities. The kit also contains a list of available resources and a series of camera-ready brochures that can easily be reproduced and distributed.

In conjunction with Crime Prevention Month, Governor Bob Miller has declared October 1998 Crime Prevention Month in Nevada. Also, the Nevada Missing Children Clearinghouse & Crime Prevention Unit, in partnership with the National Crime Prevention Council, has localized several powerful PSAs that have been distributed to television outlets throughout Nevada. The announcements are aimed at mobilizing adults to get involved in their communities and appeal to youth to dispel stereotypes about teenagers. Included in the PSA package are several series of potent messages recounting the toll of recent school shootings in Springfield, Oregon; Pearl, Mississippi; and Jonesboro, Arkansas. To the background music of "Where Have All the Children Gone," by Peter, Paul & Mary, the ads feature simple black and white scenes including the numbers of casualties and wounded, the grief of friends and relatives, the funerals, and one particularly poignant scene of a little girl planning her "inevitable" funeral.

"These powerful public service announcements are designed to have the capability of mobilizing our adult and youth to become a part of the solution in preventing crime and help keep our schools safe," said Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa. "I respectfully ask all broadcast media in possession of these powerful PSAs to give them quality air time."



In a collaborative effort to help those who wish to prevent school violence, the Attorney General's office, in partnership with the Nevada Dept. of Education, has produced a new brochure, "School Safety, A Message to the Community." The pamphlet contains anti-violence and safety tips for children, information about efforts already in place in Nevada such as the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program and the Juvenile Justice Initiative, and a list of resources for more information on the programs. To view "School Safety, A Message to the Community" and many publications available through the attorney general's office, visit the attorney general's [website](http://ag.state.nv.us/) (<http://ag.state.nv.us/>). Copies of the publications can be ordered by calling the attorney general's office in Carson City at 687-4170 or Las Vegas at 486-3420.

Nationally, this is the sixth consecutive year that crime rates have fallen. "Our experience in Nevada, like that of other communities across the country, shows the potential of grassroots, collaborative action to keep crime down," explained Del Papa. Del Papa stated that while violent crime must be a priority, the need for prevention of financial crime cannot be overlooked. Recent high-profile criminal fraud investigations have uncovered schemes costing millions of dollars to Nevadans. Those include a \$150,000 settlement with a medical supply company which defrauded the Medicaid program, an investment scheme costing a senior Nevadan \$45,000, an elaborate insurance fraud and theft scam costing \$100,000 in unpaid bills to creditors and employees, and a multi-million dollar investment scam involving infomercials through a company based in Las Vegas.

"I urge all Nevadans, law enforcement and community groups to celebrate October as Crime Prevention Month and invest in the power of prevention to help drive crime from our neighborhoods, fraud from our businesses, and build a safer future," said Del Papa. There are 150 Crime Prevention Month kits available through the Nevada Clearinghouse. To receive a Crime Prevention Month Kit, contact the Missing Children Clearinghouse & Crime Prevention Unit in Las Vegas at 486-3539 or call the National Crime Prevention Council direct at 1-800-WE-PREVENT.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jane Femiano**

**September 25, 1998**

**(702) 486-3782**

**CONSUMER ADVISORY**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL WARNS NEVADANS ABOUT E-MAIL HOAX  
GERBER SAVINGS BOND RUMOR STILL IN CIRCULATION**

- The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection is advising Nevadans to beware of a fraudulent e-mail message that is circulating on the Internet. The e-mail, whose source is identified as "**Walt Disney Jr.,**" claims that Disney and Microsoft are working together on an "e-mail tracing program" and encourages people to forward the e-mail to everyone they know. If the message is sent to 13,000 people, then 1,300 of the people on the list will receive \$5,000.00 and the rest will receive a free trip for two to Disney World. Such an offer does not exist according to Disney.

A spokesperson for the Walt Disney World Company told Nevada's Office of the Attorney General that they are aware of this false e-mail message and have nothing to do with it. The spokesperson stated that Disney is not affiliated with anything that is not communicated on their official web page at [www.disneyworld.com](http://www.disneyworld.com) or [www.disney.com](http://www.disney.com).

The Bureau of Consumer Protection advises that people simply ignore the e-mail as it has nothing to do with Disney or Microsoft.

- The Bureau also said that they continue to receive inquiries regarding rumors of a cash settlement involving **Gerber Baby Foods**. Consumers are misled to believe they can receive a \$500 savings bond from the Gerber Products Company if their children were born between 1985 and 1997 and they send in a copy of their child's birth certificate and their social security number to a post office box in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In a company statement, Gerber said it is not involved in any settlement involving reimbursements to customers and that rumors of any alleged settlement are false.

"I want to continue to caution all parents not to release birth records or other personal information about their children unless they know that information is going to a legitimate source," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said.

Gerber is not aware of the source of the rumor. Consumers with questions or concerns may find the Gerber statement and warning on their Home Page: [www.gerber.com](http://www.gerber.com). Or consumers may write to the Gerber Products Company at 445 State St., Fremont, MI 49413-1056. Or telephone 1-800-4-GERBER.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon  
September 24, 1998  
(702) 687-3512**

**MEDIA REMINDER  
NATIVE AMERICAN DAY**

This Friday, September 25, is Native American Day.

Native American Day was enacted by the State Legislature as an annual commemoration of the Indian people and their efforts to maintain their culture, custom and traditions. Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa urges all Nevadans to help commemorate the day set aside in honor of our state's Native Americans.

"The influence of Native American custom and culture is extensive. We owe them our appreciation for their contributions to our state. We also owe them the respect rightfully due their system of beliefs and way of life which has endured for so many generations," Del Papa said.

There are 26 tribes or bands with reservations or colonies located in Nevada. Most have their own legislative bodies, systems of laws and tribal courts.

"I continue to support the efforts of the tribes to govern themselves and to diversify their economic base. The state as a whole benefits from vital, prosperous tribal communities," Del Papa said.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: GREGORY R. HOJNOWSKI  
September 23, 1998  
Telephone: (702) 486-3783**

**"SLIP AND FALL" FRAUD LANDS DETROIT MAN IN JAIL**

Las Vegas -- The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit announced that Bryan Christopher Ballog, age 38 of Detroit, Michigan, pleaded guilty today to making a false claim for insurance benefits. Ballog entered his plea before Clark County District Court Judge Donald M. Mosley and was scheduled to be sentenced on November 5, 1998. The felony conviction carries a potential sentence of one to four years in the state prison, plus an additional fine of up to \$5000. Ballog has been in custody in the Clark County Jail since his extradition from Detroit in early August.

In December of 1995, Ballog, along with James Andrew Duna, staged a "slip and fall" accident in the washroom at J.C. Penney in the Meadows Mall. Ballog, faking injury, was transported to the University Medical Center. Later, with Duna, Ballog made a claim based on alleged injuries from the staged fall to Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, insurer of J.C. Penney.

Ballog has a long history of fraudulent activity, including two felony convictions, and used multiple aliases according to Deputy Attorney General Gregory R. Hojnowski, of the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit.

"This successful prosecution is an example of the teamwork approach necessary to combat insurance fraud," announced Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa. The security personnel at J.C. Penney, the Special Investigative Unit of Liberty Mutual, the National Insurance Crime Bureau, various medical professionals, and the investigation by the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit all combined to uncover this crime.

The whereabouts of Ballog's accomplice, James Andrew Duna, is unknown and there is a warrant for his arrest. Anyone with information regarding the location of Duna, or evidence of insurance fraud, should call the Insurance Fraud Hotline at (800) 266-8688.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jan Murray**

**September 23, 1998**

**(702) 486-3433**

**WANTED!**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE SEEKS INSURANCE FRAUD  
FUGITIVES**

Las Vegas--The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit is seeking information which will help lead to the arrest of Daniel James Erickson, 33, and Rory Griffin Graham, 35.

Erickson is described as a white male, brown hair, brown eyes, 6-feet tall, and 190 pounds. Date of birth is 5-17-65. His known vehicle is a 1994-1997 Mercedes Benz and his known occupations are building construction and security alarm systems.

Graham is described as a black male, brown hair, brown eyes, 6-feet tall, and 190 pounds. Date of birth is 3-7-63. His known vehicles are a 1998 BMW, a 1998 Line Navigator, and a 1993 Mercedes Benz. His known occupations are building construction and security alarm systems.

PHOTOS OF BOTH ERICKSON AND GRAHAM ARE AVAILABLE BY CONTACTING DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL JAN MURRAY WITH THE INSURANCE FRAUD UNIT IN LAS VEGAS AT: (702) 486-3433.

In May of 1998, Erickson and Graham were indicted by a Clark County Grand Jury on 16 counts of insurance fraud, four counts of obtaining money under false pretenses, and one count of racketeering, for their part in a local insurance fraud scheme. The indictment alleges that Erickson and Graham used falsified ownership documents and identification in order to purchase car insurance from several Las Vegas area insurance agencies. According to the indictment, the defendants subsequently filed multiple false claims at the various agencies for vehicle damage they claimed occurred when one of the defendants swerved to miss a coyote and hit a guardrail. The fraud was revealed when a local insurance agency employee recognized Erickson when he returned to her office and attempted to purchase additional car insurance under a different name.

The Clark County Grand Jury indictment was the result of a joint investigation by the Attorney General's Office, the National Insurance Crime Bureau, and the Special Investigative Units of Allstate, Progressive, Nevada General, and Farmers Group Insurance Companies. The investigation revealed Erickson and Graham had multiple vehicles, policies, and accident claims in Nevada, California, and Georgia.

Erickson and Graham also have federal warrants outstanding for unlawful flight to avoid prosecution. Traveling under various alias', social security and driver's licenses, Graham and Erickson have been seen in Los Angeles, San Diego and Las Vegas.

Anyone with information regarding Erickson or Graham should call the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Hotline, 1-800-266-8688. .

As in all criminal cases, an indictment is merely an allegation. Erickson and Graham are both presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Tim Terry  
September 22, 1998  
(702) 687-4704**

**MEDICAL SUPPLY COMPANY SETTLES MEDICAID FRAUD  
INVESTIGATION FOR \$150,000.00**

Carson City -- The Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) announced today that Bellfour Medical Supplies, Inc., has agreed to pay the State of Nevada \$150,000 in restitution, investigative costs and fines as the result of an investigation conducted by the MFCU during the past year.

Bellfour was engaged in supplying maternity panty hose and maternity back supports to expectant mothers in southern Nevada. Such items are paid for by the Nevada Medicaid program when they are ordered by a physician. Medicaid pays the equipment supplier according to a pricing formula that is tied to the supplier's cost of acquisition. The MFCU's investigation determined that Bellfour was providing inaccurate acquisition cost information, which inflated their reimbursement from Medicaid.

Soon after the commencement of the MFCU investigation Bellfour withdrew as a Medicaid provider and closed its Nevada offices.

Nevada's taxpayer funded Medicaid program now exceeds \$600 million annually according to Tim Terry, Director of the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit.

"It is imperative that the taxpayers' money not go to the pockets of unscrupulous providers whose own greed would drain the program's precious resources," Terry said.

The Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigates allegations of medical provider fraud in the Medicaid program as well as allegations of patient neglect or abuse at facilities that receive Medicaid funds. Anyone suspecting such conduct may contact the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit at (702) 687-4704 in Carson City or (702) 486-3777 in Las Vegas.



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: John Albrecht**

**September 21, 1998**

**(702) 687-7332**

**ELKO MEDIA ADVISORY  
TOBACCO RETAILER WORKSHOP**

A training session to help educate store owners and their staff about federal and state laws regarding underage tobacco sales will be held in Elko next week.

The workshop is sponsored by the Attorney General's office, the Nevada Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association, and the WE CARD program.

The workshop will cover topics such as: how to ask for identification and spot fake ID's; how to identify underage customers; how to refuse an illegal sale; and the requirements of state and federal law.

**ELKO TOBACCO RETAILER WORKSHOP**

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1998**

**9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.**

**RED LION INN & CASINO**

**2065 IDAHO STREET, ELKO**

"These workshops are just one part of our continuing activity to train all tobacco retailers in Nevada about responsible retailing and on state and federal laws governing the sale of tobacco," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. In 1998, the Attorney General's office began conducting additional tobacco inspections, or "stings," under contract with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. This contract will allow at least one inspection a year of every retail location which sells tobacco.

Peter Kreuger, State Executive, Nevada Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association, stated, "Because of the new FDA sting procedures, tobacco retailers should attend these workshops."

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Matthew Gabe  
September 14, 1998  
(702) 486-3128**

**CALIFORNIA MAN ARRESTED FOR LAS VEGAS INVESTMENT  
SCAM**

Las Vegas - The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced today that Mark Robert Smart, age 38 of Merced, California, surrendered to an investigator from the Attorney General's Office Friday on charges related to his involvement in a scheme which defrauded a 65-year-old widowed Las Vegas resident out of approximately \$45,000 in investments. Charged with Smart is co-defendant, Gene Michael Landreth, age 37, whose current location is unknown.

According to a seven-count felony indictment filed by the Bureau of Consumer Protection, Smart and Landreth befriended the widow and convinced her to invest with their companies, Smart Financial Services, Inc. and National Charitable Golf Tournament. Smart and Landreth told the widow the companies were Nevada corporations with the purported purpose of hosting a golf tournament in Las Vegas with the expectation of raising money for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, according to the indictment.

The criminal indictment also alleges that the defendants committed securities fraud and obtaining money under false pretenses by misrepresenting, among other things, a return of 15% on the investor's initial investment. The indictment further alleges that the defendants failed to disclose material facts to the prospective investor, such as that the securities were not registered with the Nevada Securities Division and that defendant Landreth was not licensed with the state as a sales representative.

These charges are the result of a complaint and subsequent investigation conducted by the Secretary of State, Securities Division.

A Criminal Indictment is merely an accusation. The Defendants should be presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

If convicted on the charges of Securities Fraud, Offer or Sale of an Unregistered Security, and Obtaining Money Under False Pretenses, Smart faces up to 20 years in state prison and fines. If Landreth is convicted of the above charges, he faces up to 45 years in state prison and fines. In addition to any other penalties, both defendants will be ordered to pay restitution to the investor.

If anyone has information concerning the current whereabouts of Landreth, please contact either the Securities Division at 702-486-2440 or the Attorney General's Office at 702-486-3420.

### **TIPS TO HELP AVOID INVESTMENT SCAMS**

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection offers the following tips to help consumers avoid becoming the victim of an investment scam.

Check it out before you invest or send money: Potential investors should contact state regulators to find out if the investment is registered, if the sales agent is licensed and if there are any complaints on file.

Potential investors should also demand and carefully review any written material, and do some personal research using a reputable financial advisor, accountant, or lawyer.

Potential investors need to be prepared to resist high pressure sales tactics and beware of promises of unrealistic returns.

Never sign documents you do not understand.

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Eleanor Minsky**  
**September 11, 1998**  
**(702) 688-1959**

**STATES CONTINUE FIGHT FOR FAIR COMPETITION IN AIRLINE  
PRICING**

Nevada is one of 24 states which continued to argue in support of guidelines proposed by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) that will define unfair methods of competition that the states believe have been used by major airlines to drive smaller, low fare, airlines out of business in particular markets. This week, attorneys general from the 24 states filed reply comments with the U. S. Secretary of Transportation responding point-by-point to claims made by major airlines against adoption of the guidelines.

The attorneys general's reply comments noted that low cost carrier Southwest Airlines told the DOT that it has over three-quarters of the low-fare airline revenue in the country.

"If this contention is correct, it suggests that the playing field is tilted more heavily toward major airlines than has previously been apparent," the attorneys general said in their comments. "It gives more urgency to the effort to enforce fair and just competitive business standards in the industry."

The guidelines for enforcement by DOT make no effort to re-regulate the airline industry, rather they will apply only in situations where unfair practices are used to drive low fare airlines out of a particular market. Under the proposed guidelines, DOT will determine whether the airlines have engaged in unfair exclusionary practices on a case-by-case basis and, if so, the offending airline will be subject to substantial civil penalties.

"The DOT guidelines should provide needed protections for the start-up and low-cost airlines that help keep prices low through healthy competition," Nevada Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "For example, the guidelines spell out clear definitions for anti-competitive practices such as predatory pricing. They would prohibit the major airlines from running low fare carriers out of business by temporarily lowering prices beyond a certain point and then raising them again after a competitor is

forced to leave the market."

"The states view the DOT guidelines as an effective and efficient mechanism that will help to protect low fare carriers and the cities they serve from anti-competitive behavior," Del Papa said.

The unfair methods cited by the DOT include cases where a larger airline will take a substantial short-term revenue reduction in certain markets in order to force a smaller airline to withdraw from that market. When the major carriers once again control the market, they raise their rates and oftentimes increase their original rates in order to recoup their losses.

In their original comments, which were issued in July, the attorneys general used Reno Air as one of several examples of small, low fare airlines being subjected to unfair, exclusionary practices by a major airline. According to the comments, when Reno Air attempted to establish a non-stop flight between Reno and Minneapolis in April of 1993, Northwest Airlines entered the market on the same day, matching Reno Air's low fares. Two days later, Northwest announced connecting flights from Reno to Los Angeles, San Diego and Seattle, covering all of Reno Air's other major routes. Northwest dramatically lowered fares from Minneapolis to other west coast cities, attacking Reno Air's connecting traffic through Reno. Northwest operated 26 flights to these markets compared to Reno Air's three flights. When Reno Air discontinued the Minneapolis service, Northwest returned fares to the previous levels.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Kate Marshall**  
**September 11, 1998**  
**702-688-1960**

**NEVADA JOINS IN EFFORTS URGING CONGRESS TO SUPPORT  
PRICE REPORTING FOR MEAT PACKERS**

Carson City-The Nevada Attorney General's office has joined other states' Attorneys General in urging Congress to adopt livestock improvement provisions designed to shed more light on the prices charged in the livestock industry and help promote competition.

"Nevada consumers are paying more for meat while our cattle industry is receiving less for sales of livestock to meat packers located outside Nevada," Senior Deputy Attorney General Kate Marshall said. "The livestock improvement provisions will help reveal any anti-competitive practices in the packing industry. We hope these provisions will lead to lower prices for consumers and higher sale prices to the cattle producers."

Jim Connelley, Chairman of the Nevada Board of Agriculture added, "This is a problem in Nevada too. The price today of fed cattle is almost exactly what it was in 1952. This is reflected back on the price Nevada ranchers receive for their feeder calves."

Meat prices are impacted by the fact that there are a limited number of meat packers who account for the distribution and pricing of the majority of cattle and hogs slaughtered. Although cattle ranching is the largest part of Nevada's agricultural industry, there are no large commercial meat packers in this state. Moreover, prices paid for livestock raised by producers (cattle ranches) have been dropping steadily while prices paid at the supermarket either have not changed, or in some cases, gone even higher. The result is that the packers are taking any profit in the livestock industry while the producers are receiving still lower prices for their product.

Attorneys General are concerned that a growing percentage of sales of fed cattle and slaughtered hogs are made through "forward contracts," the terms of which are not publicly reported. Concerns have been raised that the disparity of information and bargaining power between packers and producers may lead

to anti-competitive practices and behavior.

The proposed livestock improvement provisions will require meat packers to report prices and contract terms regarding their livestock sales to the Department of Agriculture.

The provisions will also set up a three-year pilot program requiring livestock packers to report prices and terms of all livestock sales to the Secretary of Agriculture. These reports will allow livestock producers the opportunity to compare prices and terms offered by packers on cash sales and non-public forward contracts. The Secretary of Agriculture will also be charged with determining noncompetitive practices of packers relating to price and other livestock sales terms.

In 1996 the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) formed a Livestock Working Group to address problems in the livestock industry. The states' Attorneys General play an important role in promoting competition through the enforcement of state and federal antitrust laws. The NAAG group has been active in the past and today sent a letter to urge Senate and House conferees to include livestock improvement provisions to the Agriculture Fiscal 1999 Appropriations Bill. The Senate and House conferees are expected to consider the legislation next week.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**

**September 9, 1998**

**(702) 687-3512**

**ADULT LITERACY TASK FORCE "PLAN FOR ACTION" WILL BE  
RELEASED AT LITERACY DAY DINNER**

The Attorney General's Adult Literacy Task Force has completed a "Plan for Action" report which summarizes the efforts of the Task Force, as well as recommends activities the Task Force expects to accomplish during the remainder of the fiscal year to support and help improve Nevada's literacy efforts.

The Task Force's plan, "Everybody's Problem, Low Literacy Skills Among Nevada's Adults," will be released during the second annual International Literacy Day Dinner on Thursday, September 10, 1998 at the Rio Suite Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

**TASK FORCE ACTION PLAN ON ADULT LITERACY INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY  
DINNER**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1998**

**COCKTAILS & SILENT AUCTION: 6:30 p.m.**

**DINNER AND PROGRAM: 7:30 p.m.**

**MADEIRA ROOM**

**RIO SUITE HOTEL AND CASINO**

**3700 W. FLAMINGO RD., LAS VEGAS**

The International Literacy Day Dinner is sponsored by the International Association of Business Communicators, Las Vegas Chapter, and Nevada Bell to help promote solutions to the problem of adult illiteracy, help raise awareness concerning the adult literacy problem in Nevada, recognize leaders in adult education and benefit the Southern Nevada Literacy Coalition.

Copies of the Action Plan will be available at the event. Deputy Attorney General Melanie Meehan-Crossley and Vicki Newell, Literate Nevada Project Coordinator, will also be available to answer



questions about the plan.

In May, 1998, Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa called together community leaders throughout the state and formed a task force to help develop this action plan. The focus of the Task Force was to develop a plan to improve literacy skills of adult Nevadans, partnering with Adult Education programs and with a special emphasis on the justice system. The Task Force has also discussed, and makes recommendations to address, the low literacy rate in Nevada's Prisons, based on the fact that 7 in 10 prisoners performed at the lowest levels of literacy.

The Attorney General's office was asked to assist with the organization of the Adult Literacy Task Force by the Literate Nevada Project, in part because the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection was directed by the state legislature to conduct a survey of telecommunication services. The goals of the survey include enhancing rural educational opportunities through greater access to telecommunications technology.

For more information about Nevada's Adult Literacy Task Force Plan of Action, please contact Emy Bell with the Nevada Literacy Coalition at 1-800-445-9673.

For further information on the International Literacy Day Dinner, please contact Laura Palumbo at (702) 382-3493, ext. 216.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Jo Ann Gibbs**  
**September 9, 1998**  
**(702) 486-3129**

**NEVADA RECEIVES PAYMENT FROM GENERAL ELECTRIC FOR  
IMPROPER DEBT COLLECTIONS**

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Affairs announced today that the state has received a check in the amount of \$353,381.46 as part of an August 7, 1998 multistate settlement with GECC and Montgomery Ward. This money will go into the state's General Fund.

The funds represents the state's share of a nationwide payment by GECC and is based upon the percentage of violations which occurred in Nevada. An estimated 700 Nevada consumers are affected by the settlement. In addition to the payment to the state, the settlement provides that affected consumers will be reimbursed or receive credit for finance charges and penalties charged by GECC, and will be reimbursed for any money paid on the reaffirmed debt plus interest.

GECC issues and administers private label credit cards for several retailers, including Montgomery Ward. The August settlement arose out of unlawful debt collection practices which came to light after a multistate investigation by states' Attorneys General. That investigation revealed that GECC asked customers who had filed Chapter 7 bankruptcy to sign a contract in which they agreed to repay their debt rather than have it dismissed in bankruptcy. GECC then failed to file those agreements with the Bankruptcy Court as required by law.

GECC and Montgomery Ward have also agreed to a judgment that will prohibit them from collecting on past reaffirmation agreements that were not properly filed. They also agreed to accurately disclose to future bankrupt customers their rights in connection with reaffirmation agreements proposed by the GECC.

In 1997, a multistate task force of Attorneys General spearheaded the investigation and settlement of a similar claim against Sears. The Sears settlement netted over \$444,000 to the state of Nevada.

Persons who feel they are eligible for reimbursement from this settlement should contact the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3786, in Reno at (702) 688-1958, or in Carson City at (702) 687-6300.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: GREGORY HOJNOWSKI  
September 8, 1998  
(702) 486-3783**

**LAS VEGAS WOMAN SENTENCED FOR INSURANCE FRAUD**

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit announced today that Lisa Rae Hartwick, age 23 of Las Vegas, was sentenced after pleading guilty for Attempting to Submit a False Claim for Insurance Benefits. As part of her plea agreement, Hartwick will complete 100 hours of community service and reimburse Nevada General Insurance Company their investigative costs.

Hartwick was involved in a traffic accident on January 21, 1995 with an individual insured by Nevada General. Unknown to Hartwick, Nevada General examined and photographed her vehicle. That investigation revealed no apparent damage to Hartwick's vehicle.

On February 16, 1995, Hartwick was involved in a second accident in which her vehicle was damaged. Hartwick then made a claim with Nevada General falsely asserting that the damage from the second accident actually occurred as a result of the first accident.

Based on the investigation conducted by Nevada General, Hartwick's claim was denied and the matter was referred to the State of Nevada's Insurance Fraud Unit.

A recent survey listed Nevada as having one of the highest auto insurance rates in the country. One of the obvious factors is the rampant prevalence of insurance fraud, explained Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa. The Insurance Fraud Unit is dedicated to aggressively prosecuting these crimes which affects all Nevada citizens in the form of higher premiums.

If you are aware of insurance fraud, please contact the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Hotline at 1-800-266-8688.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Grenville Pridham  
September 2, 1998  
702-486-3788**

**TELEMARKETER ARRESTED**

Las Vegas -- Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that Kevin Griffin, age 42, of La Puente, California, was arrested Monday by investigators of the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection for attempting to obtain money under false pretenses and unregistered telemarketing. This case arose out of an investigation conducted by the Southern Nevada Telemarketing Task Force which includes the Nevada Attorney General's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the United States Postal Inspectors.

According to the criminal complaint, Griffin called persons in Iowa and New Mexico and told them that they had won a travel package plus \$7,000 in cash. Griffin directed the person in Iowa to send a cashier's check for \$1,000 payable to an individual at an address in West Covina, California. Griffin directed the person in New Mexico to send a cashier's check for \$1,000 payable to the same individual to the Assunto Group at an address in New Orleans, Louisiana. Griffin told the persons that the \$1,000 was for handling fees and taxes.

"It is illegal to require money in advance to collect a prize or to be paid money that has been recovered from previous telemarketing losses. A prize winner should never need to send money to cover shipping, taxes, or any other kind of fee before you can collect your prize," Del Papa said. "Legitimate businesses do not require such payments when a person has won a legitimate contest. Persons should always exercise caution when asked to send money in advance."

The maximum penalty for attempted obtaining money under false pretenses is 3 years, or a fine of not more than \$5,000, or both. The maximum penalty for unregistered telemarketing is 4 years, or a fine of not more than \$50,000, or both.

As in all criminal cases, the charges against the defendant are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

**If a fraudulent telemarketer has contacted you or you have been the victim of a telemarketing fraud scheme, contact the Attorney General's Fraud Hotline in Las Vegas at 486-3777. Or contact the Attorney General's office statewide by calling Nevada's toll-free switchboard at 1-800-992-0900.**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Doug Walther**  
**October 29, 1998**  
**(702) 687-6421**

**NEVADA TO RECEIVE ADDITIONAL \$102,000 FROM OIL  
COMPANY SETTLEMENTS**

The Attorney General's office announced today that the State of Nevada will receive over \$100,000 from the Department of Energy this year as part of an on-going multi-million dollar settlement with members of the oil industry.

This week, Nevada will receive \$97,821.41 as the fourth installment of the Occidental Petroleum Consent Order Funds. In September, Nevada received \$5,155.20 as the final payment of the Citronelle settlement funds.

The settlement is a result of a series of cases known as the "Stripper Well Exemption Litigation." The cases began during the national energy crisis in the late seventies as a result of crude oil price controls imposed by Congress. Under the settlement agreement, various claimants and states, including Nevada, share in money recovered by the Department of Energy in numerous crude oil overcharge cases.

"In the seventies, various oil companies violated the law by selling crude oil above market value. This settlement has helped in compensating our state for those overcharges," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said.

The Nevada Energy Office will receive the money which is earmarked to be spent on energy and energy conservation-related projects.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jan Murray**

**October 16, 1998**

**(702) 486-3433**

**VIPER TASK FORCE INVESTIGATION LEADS TO INSURANCE  
FRAUD INDICTMENT**

Las Vegas-- The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit announced today that Clementina Balcazar Mendoza, age 48 of Las Vegas, was indicted by a Clark County Grand Jury on four felony counts of insurance fraud. According to the indictment, Mendoza, a former loan officer, assisted a loan applicant and an undercover operative in committing insurance fraud. If convicted, Mendoza faces up to sixteen years in the Nevada state prison system, fines of up to \$20,000.00, and restitution. An indictment is only an allegation, Mendoza is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

The indictment alleges that Mendoza, who was employed as a loan officer for a Las Vegas area mortgage loan company, approached a loan applicant and offered to sell a vehicle belonging to the applicant to help that applicant qualify for a home loan. Mendoza allegedly took possession of the vehicle, then assisted the applicant in filing a false stolen vehicle report to local authorities and to Sentry-Dairyland Insurance Company. Authorities became suspicious when the vehicle was photographed crossing the Mexican border before it was reported stolen. A subsequent investigation by officers assigned to the Vehicle Investigations Project for Enforcement and Recovery (VIPER) Task Force revealed the fraud. The Mendoza case highlights the team work between law enforcement and prosecutors in combating insurance fraud.

VIPER is a multi-agency task force made up of officers and investigators from the Nevada Division of Investigation (NDI), the Nevada Highway Patrol, the FBI, METRO, the North Las Vegas and Henderson Police Departments, and the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB). VIPER's mission is to investigate auto theft crime in Clark County. The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit investigates and prosecutes those who defraud insurance companies. The case file demonstrates the success of a multi-agency undercover operation and a successful search of the loan company where Mendoza worked. An active investigation continues into other alleged false stolen vehicle reports and insurance frauds which may have been coordinated by Mendoza and her associates.



If you have any information regarding a false stolen vehicle report, insurance fraud, or any felony crime please call Secret Witness in southern Nevada at (702) 385-5555 or in northern Nevada at (702) 322-4900. Secret Witness pays up to \$1,000 for the arrest and indictment of any persons involved in felony activity. The Attorney General's office also has an Insurance Fraud Hotline, 1-800-266-8688.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: John Albrecht**  
**October 16, 1998**  
**(702) 687-5024**

**YOUTH TOBACCO BUY RATE DROPS FOR SECOND YEAR**

Carson City- Nevada's youth tobacco buy rate continues to drop according to the latest study conducted by the Attorney General's office. The statewide study, conducted last month at 435 over-the-counter locations and 54 vending machines, showed that children were sold tobacco only 16.8% of the time. This is down from the 19.8 % youth buy rate found in July, 1997, and significantly down from the youth buy rate of 64 % reported in 1994 in a study by the Nevada Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse. The study has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5%.

"Children are less able to buy tobacco in this state thanks to the collective efforts of all Nevadans," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "Retailers, law enforcement, parents, schools, and health agencies have contributed to these results."

In 1995, the Nevada Legislature assigned to the Attorney General the responsibility of conducting "stings" to enforce state law prohibiting the sale of tobacco to minors. The Legislature was responding to a federal statute that required states to complete these inspections as a condition of receiving a substance abuse treatment grant. Nevada receives about \$7 million per year under that grant and could lose 40 % of the grant if it did not reduce the youth buy rate to under 20 % by the year 2003. For two consecutive years, the youth buy rate in Nevada has been less than 20 %.

Attorney General Del Papa worked with tobacco retailers in developing and distributing training programs for sales clerks who sell tobacco. Most recently, the Attorney General's office and retail groups mailed out thousands of copies of a survey to test the knowledge of Nevada sales clerks on the laws governing the sale of tobacco to children. Over 1200 sales clerks completed and returned the test, and scored an average of 91 % correct on the survey.

WEBSITE: <http://ag.state.nv.us/> E-Mail: [aginfo@govmail.state.nv.us](mailto:aginfo@govmail.state.nv.us) FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Bob Harmon October 15, 1998 (702) 687-3512 MEDIA ADVISORY SAFE SCHOOLS WEEK AND YWCA'S WEEK WITHOUT VIOLENCE BEGIN ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1998 On Friday, October 16, 1998, the YWCA of Reno-Sparks will join an international campaign promoting a "Week Without Violence" with a 3:00 p.m. press conference at Reno City Hall. This press conference is the first in a series of activities taking place in the Reno area focusing attention on practical and sustainable alternatives to violence in homes, schools, places of work and neighborhoods. Led by YWCAs in thousands of communities in the United States and more than twenty countries on six continents, this year's campaign emphasizes alternatives to family violence, gun violence, violence linked to racism and bigotry, and violence in the media. YWCA's calendar of "Week Without Violence" events is attached to this release. For more information, contact the YWCA of Reno-Sparks at (702) 322-4531 or visit the YWCA website at: [www.ywca.org](http://www.ywca.org). The National School Safety Center (NSSC) has also designated October 18-24, 1998 as "America's Safe Schools Week." NSSC sponsors "American Safe Schools Week" in order to help recognize and honor efforts that are working to ensure schools are safe, secure, and productive. This month, new programs aimed at reducing violence in schools were launched in both Clark County and Washoe County. For more information on programs in your area, contact your local school district. For more information on "America's Safe Schools Week," visit the NSSC website at: [www.nssc1.org](http://www.nssc1.org). (more) Early in September, the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG) and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) announced a joint website as part of a new nationwide initiative aimed at helping ongoing efforts to keep schools safe. The purpose of this website is to share ideas and information about various school safety and anti-violence programs, provide up-to-date information on successful programs and ideas that work toward safer schools, and to help communities and schools devise the most appropriate response to reducing youth violence. Each month, the website will focus on a specific aspect of youth violence and school safety problems faced by communities. The NAAG/NSBA joint website is located at: [www.keepschoolssafe.org](http://www.keepschoolssafe.org). In conjunction with the national initiative, the Nevada Department of Education and the Nevada Office of the Attorney General released an informational pamphlet to assist anyone interested in participating with efforts to help keep school, and children, safe. This pamphlet contains anti-violence and safety tips for children, as well as information about efforts already underway in Nevada on a statewide level such as the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program and the Attorney General's Juvenile Justice Initiative, and a list of state resources for more information on these programs. The pamphlet also contains suggestions provided by NAAG and NSBA for a safe school plan along with information about their new national Youth Violence and School Safety Initiative and joint website. The pamphlet is available from the Attorney General's office in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420, in Reno at (702) 688-1818, or in Carson City at (702) 687-3420. The pamphlet is also available on the Attorney General's website at: [www.state.nv.us/ag/](http://www.state.nv.us/ag/) The NAAG/NSBA joint school safety website is also accessible through the Nevada Attorney General's website. The Nevada Office of the Attorney General joins the Nevada Department of Education, National School Safety Center, and the YWCA in recognizing the many communities who have already formed partnerships addressing the issue of youth violence and school safety and ask that parents, schools, law enforcement, and communities continue to work together to help ensure Nevada's schools are safe places for children to learn. ###

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Richard C. Linstrom**

**October 14, 1998**

**(702) 486-3789**

**ARREST MADE IN TRAVEL FRAUD CASE**

Las Vegas-- The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced today that Jouko Lankinen, age 44 of Las Vegas, was arrested Tuesday, October 13, 1998 for defrauding the Stratosphere Hotel and Casino, as well as an out-of-state business and a Las Vegas visitor. A criminal complaint filed by the Bureau charges the defendant with five felony counts of forgery. The complaint also charges Lankinen with being a habitual offender.

Lankinen operates the Las Vegas Welcome Center, a local travel agency. The complaint alleges that Lankinen altered and forged checks from various businesses and individuals and then deposited the altered checks into Las Vegas Welcome Center's bank accounts.

The Attorney General's Office previously arrested and prosecuted Lankinen for a scheme to defraud other Las Vegas visitors. In response to nation-wide advertising, out-of-town tourists would contact Las Vegas Welcome Center to make hotel and show reservations. Lankinen, as owner of the Las Vegas Welcome Center, or his employees, would inform the victims that they would need to provide a credit card number in order to hold the hotel reservation. The victims were further told that they had to prepay the hotel accommodations by sending Las Vegas Welcome Center a check made out to the travel agency. When the victims checked into the hotel they would learn that their hotel room was not prepaid or only prepaid for one night charged to their credit card. When victims called the Las Vegas Welcome Center to complain that their hotel rooms were not prepaid, they were told that the Las Vegas Welcome Center did pay the hotel and that the hotel must have made a mistake. Upon checking out of the hotel, the victims would still have to pay the hotel for the room. Lankinen did not refund victims the money they had previously sent to the travel agency. As part of the guilty plea agreement in that case, Lankinen agreed to pay restitution to 22 victims.

As in all criminal cases, the current charges against the defendant are merely accusations and the defendant is to be considered innocent until and unless he is proven guilty in court. Anyone with information concerning a possible travel scam should contact the state's Consumer Affairs Division. In

Clark County phone: (702) 486-7355; anywhere outside of Clark County phone: (800) 326-5202.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Richard Linstrom  
October 14, 1998  
(702) 486-3789**

**JUDGMENT AND RESTRAINING ORDER GRANTED AGAINST  
PYRAMID SCHEME**

Las Vegas- The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced that late yesterday Clark County District Court Judge Stephen L. Huffaker ordered Christopher Grant and Roseann Dipasquale, both of Las Vegas, to refrain from any further participation in the "Co-opportunities International" pyramid scheme, to pay \$1,000 in civil penalties each, and to pay attorney fees and costs to the Office of the Attorney General.

Judge Huffaker's decision came after a one day bench trial of a civil lawsuit brought against Grant and Dipasquale by the Bureau of Consumer Protection. Fifteen such suits were filed by the Attorney General's office in 1996 against 57 individuals in southern Nevada who were alleged to have participated in the pyramid scheme. Most of the cases have been resolved by settlement or default judgment. Two remaining cases are set for trial next year in Las Vegas.

Promoting pyramid schemes is a violation of the Nevada Deceptive Trade Practices Act, and may result in criminal or civil charges. In this case, the complaint charged that the promoters of "Co-opportunities International" commonly described the scam as a "social" or "gift" club and that to become a member, new recruits were alleged to have been required to make a "gift" of \$2,000 to a person called the "resource chair" at the top of the pyramid. Once the "resource chair" received \$16,000.00 from eight new members, that person was to leave the position and the pyramid was divided in half. All members then moved up a level and were required to recruit two additional members. Eventually, as in all pyramid schemes, the "gift" club would collapse for lack of additional individuals to recruit.

Persons suspecting that a potential investment may be a pyramid scheme should contact the Nevada Securities Division at (702) 486-2440 in Las Vegas or (702) 688-1855 in Reno.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Ronda Clifton  
October 13, 1998  
Telephone: (702) 688-1818**

**RENO WOMAN ENTERS FRAUD PLEA FOR FORGED FURNITURE  
CLAIM**

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit announced today that Magdalena Frederick, age 40 of Reno, pleaded guilty in Washoe District Court to one count of conspiracy to commit insurance fraud related to the forging of documents to support a false insurance claim.

According to an investigation by the Insurance Fraud Unit, Frederick submitted the forged document to SAFECO Insurance Company to support a false claim for payment on furniture she claimed was stolen from her home.

Frederick entered her plea this morning before Judge Janet Berry in Department 1 of Washoe District Court. Sentencing has been scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on December 2, 1998. Frederick faces a maximum of one year in jail and a \$2,000 fine.

"With the availability of high tech computer programs, the submission of forged bills and receipts has become very popular with insurance fraud perpetrators," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "This case illustrates the commitment by law enforcement and the insurance industry to detect and prosecute those who would use forged documentation to support false insurance claims."

If you have information concerning insurance fraud, call the Insurance Fraud Hotline at 1-800-266-8688.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Richard Linstrom**

**October 9, 1998**

**(702) 486-3789**

**FINAL DEFENDANT SENTENCED IN SIX-MILLION DOLLAR  
TELEMARKETING CASE**

Las Vegas - Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa and Nevada United States Attorney Kathryn Landreth announced that the final defendant in a telemarketing fraud case was sentenced today in federal court in Las Vegas. U.S. District Judge Philip M. Pro sentenced Edmund Burke, age 61 of Las Vegas, to 8 months imprisonment and ordered him to make \$230,598 in restitution for his role in the United Holdings Group telemarketing fraud case. Burke was indicted on December 16, 1995 and pled guilty on October 14, 1997 to multiple counts of wire fraud. Burke is the last of 16 defendants convicted in this case to be sentenced. The restitution ordered to victims from all 16 defendants totals over six million dollars.

United Holdings Group was a Las Vegas telemarketing operation which operated from June 1993 to May 1994. Telemarketers solicited charitable contributions from mostly elderly victims, promising them prizes in connection with a "tax deductible donation" to a sham charity named the "Express Line Foundation." A similar pitch was used to solicit funds for the other phony charities including "American Freedom Association," which purported to locate and free American prisoners of war.

The sentencing of Burke and the other defendants was the culmination of a two-year investigation by the Nevada Attorney General's office. The case was prosecuted by the U.S. Department of Justice as part of Operation Senior Sentinel, a nationwide state-federal initiative against fraud targeting seniors.

Collectively, the defendants in this case have been sentenced to prison terms totaling 208 months.

In addition to the victim restitution of over six million dollars, the court has ordered \$2.91 million forfeited to state and local law enforcement agencies.

Following is a complete list of defendants convicted and sentenced in the United Holdings Group telemarketing fraud case:



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA v. ROBERTS, ET AL.

United States District Court, District of Nevada

Case No. CR-S-95-330-PMP

<b>DEFENDANT</b>	<b>SENTENCING DATE</b>	<b>SENTENCE</b>
<b>Carla ADAMS</b>	2/5/98	4 mo. home confinement; 3 yrs. probation; \$222,582 restitution; 100 hrs. comm. svc.
<b>Harold ADRIEU</b>	3/17/98	5 mo. prison; 5 mo. home confinement; 3 yrs. supervised release; \$138,501 restitution; 3 yrs no telemarketing
<b>Hossein BERHAMAND</b>	1/16/98	15 mo. prison; 3 yrs. probation; \$229,695 restitution
<b>Edmund BURKE</b>	10/09/98	8 mo. prison; 3 yrs. supervised release; \$230,598 restitution; 3 yrs no telemarketing
<b>Grover CRAIG</b>	1/16/98	10 mo. prison; \$257,958 restitution
<b>David DAWSON</b>	1/14/98	1 yr. and 1 day prison; \$221,566 restitution
<b>Michael EMELIO</b>	3/17/98	15 mo. prison; 3 yrs. supervised release; \$486,508 restitution; 3 yrs. no telemarketing
<b>Maria PELLIGRINO</b>	2/20/98	6 mo. home confinement; 100 hrs. comm. svc.; \$7,751 restitution
<b>John J. ROBERTS</b>	2/20/98	41 mo. prison; \$2,522,943 restitution
<b>William ROCK</b>	3/20/98	15 mo. prison; \$526,000 restitution; forfeiture \$343,800
<b>Denise TURNBOW</b>	4/22/98	15 mo. prison; \$320,306 restitution
<b>Chris VENER</b>	3/17/98	1 mo. prison; 3 yrs. supervised release; \$421,093 restitution; forfeiture \$2.5 m. Rolls Royce, Corvette; 3 years no telemarketing
<b>Janet VENER</b>	3/17/98	15 mo. prison; 3 yrs. supervised release \$272,640 restitution; forfeiture \$66,200 Rolls Royce, Corvette; 3 years no telemarketing
<b>Michael VIZZI</b>	2/25/98	5 mo. prison; 5 mo. home detention; \$286,408 restitution
<b>Obond K. WHITE</b>	1/16/98	6 mo. prison; 3 years probation; \$27,596 restitution

**Maxine YOUNG**

2/25/98

5 mo. prison; 5 mo. home detention; \$296,057  
restitution

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Marta Adams**

**October 7, 1998**

**(702) 687-5866**

**STATE ASKS FOR FEDERAL COURT REVIEW OF DOE SEIZURE  
OF NUCLEAR WASTE PROJECT FUNDS**

The Nevada Attorney General's office filed a petition today seeking return of approximately \$700,000 in federal funds seized from the state's Nuclear Waste Project Office by the U. S. Department of Energy. The petition, filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, challenges the findings of an audit which determined the funds were misspent and argues that the expenditures were consistent with the mandates of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (NWPAA).

The NWPAA requires state oversight and review during the site characterization phase of the Yucca Mountain Project to allow the state to prepare a position in the event Yucca Mountain is recommended to the President as a site for the nation's high-level nuclear waste repository. Under the NWPAA, the Secretary of Energy is required to make grants to the State of Nevada for the purpose of participating in activities related to an independent evaluation of the potential economic, social, public health and safety, and environmental impacts caused by the location of a high-level nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain.

"The March 1996 GAO report first raised the allegations regarding the expenditures of Nevada's Nuclear Waste Project Office. In our review of that report, we determined that the report was deficient in identifying any unauthorized expenditures," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "The subsequent audit used by the DOE to freeze federal funds for Nevada's Nuclear Waste Project found nothing new."

"The court cases that have addressed spending restrictions have stated that the structure of the NWPAA and its legislative history indicate that states should be entitled to the broadest possible rights and opportunities to participate in the development of repository facilities in order to promote public confidence in the safety of nuclear waste disposal," Del Papa said.

The Attorney General's office is responsible for providing legal support, advice, and counsel for the Governor, the Nuclear Waste Project Office, and the State Legislature regarding the development of a high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain. Additionally, the Attorney General's office has expended substantial effort the last fifteen years laying the foundation for Nevada's case that Yucca Mountain is not suitable to be licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission as a nuclear waste repository.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Wayne Howle**  
**October 6, 1998**  
**(702) 687-4449**

**JURY FAVORS STATE IN \$800,000 LAWSUIT**

The Attorney General's office announced today that late Monday afternoon, a federal jury in Reno returned a unanimous verdict favoring the state in a lawsuit filed by former state employee Jon Remlinger. Remlinger sought \$800,000 in damages for alleged civil rights violations.

In the suit, Remlinger claimed he was laid off from his job as a pilot with the Nevada Division of Wildlife in 1995 because of a disability and in retaliation for filing earlier discrimination complaints against the Division.

Witnesses for the state countered Remlinger's claims by testifying that the layoff was a measure intended to save costs and improve efficiency in the state's air operations and denied the layoff was motivated in any part by either Remlinger's back condition, or his previous complaints.

"We are pleased with the result," said Peter Morros, director of the state's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Morros explained that the layoff was a result of the reorganization of state government in 1993.

"It is difficult any time someone is laid off. But the state as employer always needs to examine how it spends the public's tax dollars, and make reductions wherever possible," Morros said.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Richard Linstrom  
October 1, 1998  
(702) 486-3789**

**PROTECTION THROUGH PREVENTION GOAL OF  
NATIONAL ANTI-FRAUD CAMPAIGN**

The Nevada Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced today it has joined with the Federal Trade Commission, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the American Association of Retired Persons, and others in a new campaign to help with ongoing efforts to educate consumers and small businesses regarding fraudulent offers that come in the mail.

Federal and state officials launched the campaign this morning by announcing new initiatives to help law enforcement combat mass mail fraud. As part of this nationwide campaign, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service announced it will send a special crime prevention message to every residential address in the country, over 120 million households.

"Crooks who use the mail seek to take advantage of the trust Americans have in the Postal Service as a safe, secure, and reliable means of communications," Chief Postal Inspector Kenneth J. Hunter said this morning. "We in the Postal Inspection Service are determined to prevent unscrupulous promoters from undermining that trust."

The Nevada Bureau of Consumer Protection, celebrating its first anniversary during the month of October, supports these efforts to help protect consumers through education. "This campaign should help educate consumers on how to avoid scams by telling them how to see through fraudulent offers that come in the mail," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said.

The consumer protection campaign includes some of the following tip-offs to help identify potential mail fraud:

- Promises of easy money, instant credit (regardless of your credit history), and guarantees that you've won a fabulous or valuable prize.

- Magazine subscription offers that ask you to call for information about a contest, prize, or sweepstakes.
- Prize offers that require a purchase. The cost of merchandise will be higher than the value of the "prize" you may win.
- Tickets for international lotteries. It's illegal to buy or sell tickets for international lotteries by phone or mail.
- Plans that offer commissions for recruiting distributors, not for making sales. These are pyramid schemes. Pyramids will cost you money because they inevitably collapse.
- Promises to repair your credit history for an advance fee. Federal laws prohibit these companies from collecting a fee until after they've done what they promise. There's actually nothing they can do for you for a fee that you can't do for yourself for free.
- Chain letters or variations on chain letters that require you to send money. They are illegal.
- Solicitations that look like government documents. The government does not solicit money from citizens.

"A great rule of thumb is that consumers should always be wary of solicitations that appear to be too good to be true. Most of the time they are," Del Papa said.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**

**October 1, 1998**

**(702) 687-3512**

**OCTOBER IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH  
BUMPER STICKERS HELP TO SEND MESSAGE: "THERE IS NO  
EXCUSE"**

In recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month this October, a variety of events will be held throughout Nevada for those who would like to get involved with efforts to help break the cycle of violence that threatens many of Nevada's families.

Nationwide, millions of women are physically abused each year. In Nevada, 24,000 women contacted domestic violence programs during calendar year 1997. According to statistics compiled by the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence, at least 13 women were murdered in 1997 in cases where the proven, alleged, or suspected perpetrator was a husband, boyfriend, intimate partner, or acquaintance.

"Every individual, in one way or another, should be concerned about the culture of violence which permeates our daily lives," said Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa. "Statistics show that thousands more in Nevada will be battered this year alone. These women are daughters, mothers, sisters and neighbors. Each of us must get involved in efforts to help stop a crime that is not limited to race, income brackets or age groups."

As part of the state's public awareness efforts, the Nevada Domestic Violence Prevention Project has asked law enforcement agencies throughout the state to help with the distribution and display of bumper stickers which display the message, "There's No Excuse For Domestic Violence."

The idea for the bumper sticker project originated in the state of Alabama which challenged other states to match their efforts by helping to illustrate a nationwide commitment to take action against domestic violence.

Attorney General Del Papa and the other members of the Nevada Domestic Violence Prevention Project



would like to recognize and thank the following agencies for their participation in the bumper sticker program:

**Boulder City Police Department**  
**Nevada Highway Patrol (Elko)**  
**Carlin Police Department**  
**Nevada Highway Patrol (Las Vegas)**  
**Carson City Sheriff's Office**  
**Nevada P.O.S.T.**  
**Churchill County Sheriff's Department**  
**North Las Vegas Police Department**  
**Clark County School District Police**  
**Nye County Sheriff's Department, Beatty**  
**Elko Police Department**  
**Nye County Sheriff's Department**  
**Esmeralda County Sheriff's Department**  
**Pyramid Lake Tribal Police Department**  
**Humboldt County Sheriff's Office**  
**Reno/Sparks Tribal Police Department**  
**Lander County Sheriff's Department**  
**State Capitol Police Department**  
**Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department**  
**Storey County Sheriff's Department**  
**Lincoln County Sheriff's Department**  
**Washoe County School District Police**  
**Lyon County Sheriff's Department**  
**Washoe Tribal Police Department**  
**Mesquite Police Department**  
**West Wendover City Police Department**  
**Mineral County Sheriff's Department**  
**White Pine County Sheriff's Department**  
**Nevada Highway Patrol**  
**Winnemucca Police Department**

"Affixing a bumper sticker to a car takes only a few seconds but it helps send the clear message that there is no excuse for domestic violence," Del Papa said. Persons interested in obtaining bumper stickers may contact the Attorney General's Office for particulars.

A calendar of Domestic Violence Awareness Month events is attached to this press release along with an additional fact sheet provided by the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence.

For further information please contact Nevada's toll-free, domestic violence information and referral line at 1-800-230-1955. If you are being abused, or know someone who is, call Nevada's Domestic Violence

Hotline at 1-800-500-1556, 24 hours a day, to get help.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Ronda Clifton**  
**November 24, 1998**  
**(702) 688-1835**

**RENO MAN ARRESTED FOR INSURANCE FRAUD**

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit announced today that Norris Bacho, age 44 of Reno, was arrested and booked into the Washoe County Jail on a felony charge of insurance fraud.

The criminal complaint filed by the Attorney General's office alleges that Bacho submitted claims to three insurance companies claiming his vehicle had been stolen. According to the complaint, Bacho collected money from two of the insurance companies when, in fact, he knew the car had been repossessed by the lien holder for failure to make payments.

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit opened this investigation after receiving information uncovered by the Washoe County Sheriff's Department (WCSO). The WCSO was conducting its own investigation of Bacho on allegations of prescription drug fraud. Bacho has since pled guilty to fraudulently obtaining prescription drugs.

If convicted, Bacho could receive a sentence of up to four years in prison and a \$5,000 fine.

As in all criminal cases, the criminal complaint is only an allegation and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**  
**November 24, 1998**  
**(702) 687-3512**

**DEL PAPA ANNOUNCES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE GRANTS**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa, who chairs the Nevada Domestic Violence Prevention Council, today announced the recipients of nearly \$1,100,000 in domestic violence prevention grants awarded in the fight against domestic violence and related issues. The grants, awarded in accordance with the 1998 federal funding provided under the Stop Violence Against Women Act, will be distributed to agencies statewide to help in the fight against domestic violence.

VAWA funds target coordination of law enforcement and prosecution strategies statewide to combat violent crimes committed against women. Funds are also awarded to assist in developing and enhancing governmental and private advocacy programs that aid such victims.

"These grants will be very valuable in helping to provide additional services to victims, to train law enforcement, and enhance Nevada's overall response to domestic violence," Del Papa said. Dozens of entities and organizations from throughout Nevada submitted proposals for the grants.

"Although the funding decisions were very difficult, priority was given to areas showing the greatest need based on the availability of existing domestic violence and sexual assault programs in the population and geographic area to be served, in relation to the availability of such services in other populations and areas," Del Papa said. Priority was also given to services for underserved populations including elderly, disabled and minority victims, as well as geographically isolated victims and those victims who are isolated for reasons such as homelessness or drug and alcohol dependence.

"In an attempt to better reach Nevada's underserved population groups, each grant recipient is being required to extend whatever training is offered to rural and tribal communities. Recipients are also encouraged, whenever appropriate, to make publications available in Spanish as well as English," Del Papa added.

Attached is a list of funded organizations, amount of funding, and an abbreviated description of the purpose of each project.

## **Law Enforcement**

Committee Against Domestic Violence/Elko County Sheriff's Department  
(Law enforcement training)

- \$ 44,900

Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department  
(Victim advocate to respond with officers  
on domestic violence calls within Clark County)

- \$ 33,042

Storey County Sheriff's Department  
(Equipment for evidence collection)

- \$ 7,200

Safe House, Inc.  
(Victim Advocate to work with Henderson Police  
Department)

- \$ 28,000

Safe Nest  
(Part-time advocates located within North Las  
Vegas, Mesquite & Boulder City Police Departments)

- \$ 45,649

Washoe County Sheriff's Department  
(Victim Advocate within sheriff's department)

- \$ 38,000

Washoe County District Attorney  
(Victim resource center - investigators, prosecutors,  
social services & medical services in one location)

- \$ 75,146

## **Prosecution**

Clark County District Attorney  
(Fund the hiring of prosecution & support staff)

- \$ 77,000

Henderson City Attorney  
(Funding one domestic violence victim advocate)

- \$ 33,000

Nevada Prosecution Advisory Council (statewide)  
(Standardized protocols, manual, & prosecutor training)

- \$ 70,696

Las Vegas City Attorney  
(Partially fund one victim advocate position)

- \$ 50,000

Sparks City Attorney  
(For the funding of a domestic violence victim  
advocate position)

- \$ 28,000

Storey County District Attorney  
(Upgrade technology within office)

- \$ 13,241

### **Victim Services & Discretionary Awards**

Domestic Violence Prevention Council (statewide)  
(Expenses and training for 23-member council)

- \$ 5,000

Domestic Violence Ombudsman (statewide)

- \$ 33,662

Advocates to End Domestic Violence [Carson City area]  
(To fund victim advocate)

- \$ 16,000

Carson City Center for Independent Living  
(Outreach to disabled victims of domestic violence)

- \$ 5,000

Clark County Pro Bono Project  
(To provide legal services to victims of domestic violence)

- \$ 20,000

Committee to Aid Abused Women [Northern Nevada]  
(To strengthen existing protection order project)

- \$ 30,000

Community Action Against Rape [Clark County]  
(To provide training to crisis intervention counselors for victims of sexual assault)

- \$ 22,000

Crisis Call Center, Inc. [Washoe County/Carson area]  
(To enhance existing program aiding sexual assault victims)

- \$ 16,000

Committee Against Domestic Violence [Elko]  
(Funding for Victim Court Advocate)

- \$ 25,000

Economic Opportunity Board [Clark County]  
(Counseling services for domestic violence victims with chemical addiction)

- \$39,800

Family and Child Treatment [Clark County]  
(Funding for domestic violence therapist)

- \$ 20,000

Family Support Council of Douglas County [Douglas County area]  
(To funding for a case worker to assist victims of domestic violence)

- \$ 20,000

Greater Light Christian Center [Washoe County]  
(Assistance geared toward under served African-American victims of domestic violence)

- \$ 7,500

Latino Peace Officer's Association [Clark County]  
(Counseling services to Hispanic victims of domestic violence)

- \$ 15,600

Mineral County Advocates to End Domestic Violence

(To partially fund a domestic violence victim's court advocate)

- \$ 6,000

Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence [Statewide]

(Technical assistance at statewide conference)

- \$ 15,000

Nevada Outreach Training Organization [Central-Southern Nevada]

(To partially fund Frontier Outreach Project providing victim services throughout Nye and Esmeralda Counties)

- \$ 15,000

Nevada Urban Indians [Northern Nevada]

(Emergency shelter and advocacy services for Native American victims of domestic violence)

- \$24,718

Safe House, Inc. [Clark County]

(Domestic violence victim advocate program)

- \$ 28,300

Step 2 [Washoe County]

(Counseling services for domestic violence victims with substance dependencies)

- \$35,000

Tahoe Women Services [Incline and surrounding Tahoe areas]

(Domestic violence victim advocacy services)

- \$ 10,000

Temporary Assistance for Domestic Crisis [Clark County]

(Advocacy services at the emergency shelter for domestic violence victims in Laughlin and expand services in N. Las Vegas)

- \$ 29,295

UNLV - Jean Nidetch Women's Center

(Funding for domestic violence student counselors and outreach)

- \$ 5,000

UNR Psychological Services



(Counseling for student victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, intern training & self-esteem classes)

- \$ 20,000

University School of Medicine [Clark County]

(Expansion of data collection project)

- \$ 75,000

Volunteer Lawyers for Washoe County

(To enhance lawyer services to victims of domestic violence seeking protective orders)

- \$ 5,000

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Matthew Gabe  
November 20, 1998  
(702) 486-3793**

**NEVADA FUGITIVE AGAIN ON AMERICA'S MOST WANTED**

On Saturday, November 21, 1998, the nationally syndicated television show "America's Most Wanted" is scheduled to show an All Points Bulletin (APB) involving fugitive Eric Stein, age 37, of Las Vegas. The show will air at 9:00 p.m. on FOX.

"America's Most Wanted" featured an entire segment regarding Stein on August 8, 1998. As of today, he still remains a fugitive. Stein faces criminal charges related to a scam involving millions of dollars invested in infomercials through a Las Vegas-based company named "The Sterling Group."

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection has filed a 12-count criminal complaint against Stein and co-defendant Ina Liberty Bell of Las Vegas. According to the complaint, the defendants represented to prospective investors that "The Sterling Group" promoted products by direct response infomercials. Investors would receive a portion of the profits resulting from the sale of these products by purchasing increments of infomercial time called "media units." Each "media unit" was sold for \$5,000, with a minimum purchase of two units required.

The complaint charges that the defendants committed securities fraud and racketeering by misrepresenting to prospective investors, among other things, a return of 25% to 53% within a period of 60 to 90 days.

The charge was the result of an investigation conducted by the Nevada Secretary of State, Securities Division.

A criminal complaint is merely an accusation. The defendants should be presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

Persons with information regarding the current whereabouts of Eric Stein should contact the Attorney

General's Office at (702) 486-3221 in Las Vegas.

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection offers the following tips to help consumers avoid becoming the victim of an investment scam:

- Check it out before you invest or send money: Potential investors should contact state regulators to find out if the investment is registered, if the sales agent is licensed and if there are any complaints on file.
- Potential investors should also demand and carefully review any written material, and do some personal research using a reputable financial advisor, accountant, or lawyer.
- Potential investors need to be prepared to resist high pressure sales tactics and beware of promises of unrealistic returns.
- Never sign documents you do not understand.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Persons who believe that they have been the victim of securities fraud should call the Nevada Securities Division in Las Vegas at 486-2440 or in Reno at 688-1855. In addition, consumer protection information is always available on the Attorney General's website at <http://ag.state.nv.us/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Matthew Gabe**  
**November 18, 1998**  
**(702) 486-3793**

**INVESTMENT SCAM LEADS TO GUILTY PLEA**

Las Vegas - The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced today that Hai Pia Nguyen, age 23 of Las Vegas, pled guilty to one felony count of securities fraud in connection to a scam involving thousands of dollars invested in a corporation known as "Environmental Solutions Enterprise."

According to a criminal indictment filed by the Bureau, Nguyen told local residents that "Environmental Solutions Enterprise" distributed environmental products, such as air filters. The indictment charged that Nguyen committed securities fraud by misrepresenting to prospective investors a monthly return of 10 percent over a period of six months, among other things.

The indictment was the result of an investigation conducted by the Secretary of State, Securities Division.

The charge of securities fraud carries a possible sentence of up to 5 years in state prison and a fine of up to \$100,000. In addition, Nguyen has agreed to pay \$30,000 in restitution to his victims. Nguyen is scheduled for sentencing in Department 6 of the Clark County District Court on January 13, 1999.

Persons who believe that they have been the victim of securities fraud should call the Nevada Securities Division in Las Vegas at 486-2440 or in Reno at 688-1855. In addition, consumer protection information is always available on the Attorney General's website at: <http://ag.state.nv.us/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Marilyn Skibinski  
November 18, 1998  
(702) 687-6300**

**NEVADA CONSUMER ADVOCATE TO HEAD NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION**

Nevada Consumer Advocate Fred Schmidt was elected president of the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA) during the association's annual meeting in Orlando last week. Schmidt, Chief Deputy of the Nevada Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection, has been a member of NASUCA since 1988 and has previously served as vice-president and chairman of the electricity committee.

NASUCA is a national organization with 44 member offices in 39 states and the District of Columbia which represents the interests of millions of American consumers served by investor-owned gas, telephone, electric, and water utilities. NASUCA members, through actions before state and federal courts and regulatory agencies, have saved consumers billions of dollars in utility costs and established important consumer rights and legal precedents.

"The organization has significant influence in national public policymaking through testimony members provide at congressional hearings and before federal regulatory agencies," Schmidt said. "For example, at its recent meeting, the organization adopted a nationwide position on market power issues related to electric industry restructuring that will be distributed to federal and state regulators and lawmakers. The members also developed written comments urging the Federal Communications Commission to set specific truth-in-billing standards for telephone service providers."

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**  
**November 16, 1998**  
**(702) 687-3512**

**NEVADA AG'S OFFICE REVIEWING TOBACCO SETTLEMENT  
PROPOSAL**

The Nevada Attorney General's office has received the new tobacco industry settlement proposal to the states and is in the process of reviewing the document. The settlement proposal mandates significant legal reform in the tobacco industry and one of the largest financial recoveries in the nation's history. Details of the proposal were released by members of the Attorneys General negotiating team during a press conference in Washington D.C. earlier today.

The proposed settlement will bring an estimated \$1,194,976,854 to Nevada over a period of 25 years. Payments of approximately \$48 million dollars a year, adjusted annually for inflation, continue in perpetuity. (A two page summary of Nevada's allocation of the proposed settlement is attached to this release.)

The settlement proposal, which was negotiated over the last five months, has been sent to all other Attorneys General with pending law suits against the tobacco industry for review. It will not be final unless agreed to by an as-yet unspecified number of states. A signing deadline has been set for noon on Friday, November 20, 1998. A decision is expected November 23.

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa, who is currently traveling abroad, received an extensive personal briefing on the proposal before departing and will return prior to the signing deadline. Earlier this year Del Papa sought input from Nevada's public health community and others regarding Nevada's public health needs related to tobacco.

Under the proposed settlement, the industry would pay attorney fees for outside counsel contracted by the states, and reimburse states for time incurred by Attorneys General's staff and other costs related to the litigation.

Under the settlement proposal, tobacco companies would agree to significant curbs on advertising and marketing campaigns, fund a \$1.5 billion anti-smoking education fund, open previously secret industry documents, and disband industry trade groups which the Attorneys General maintain conspired to conceal damaging research from the public.

The proposed settlement contains numerous provisions aimed at protecting children, an important priority for Del Papa. In filing their lawsuits, state Attorneys General contended the industry was targeting children. In this nation, about 3,000 children a day start smoking, and a third of them will eventually die prematurely as a result of that decision.

Provisions in the proposed settlement would ban cartoon characters in tobacco advertising, prohibit the industry from targeting youth in ads and marketing, prohibit billboards and transit advertising, and ban the sale and distribution of apparel, backpacks and other merchandise which bear brand name logos and become, in effect, walking billboards.

The negotiating team said the settlement won't end youth smoking in America, but it does provide "realistic, workable steps to stop the addiction of our children."

To ensure the industry lives up to the agreement, the settlement would be enforceable through consent decrees which will be entered in each state court. In addition, the industry will provide \$50 million for an enforcement fund which states could use to pursue violations of the settlement.

In May of 1997, Del Papa filed a lawsuit on behalf of the State of Nevada against nineteen tobacco companies and organizations seeking reimbursement for tobacco related health care costs of Nevada's Medicaid and other health care programs. The suit alleges, among other things, that the industry conspired to violate antitrust and consumer protection laws, tobacco companies conspired to withhold information about adverse health effects of tobacco, they manipulated nicotine levels to keep smokers addicted, and that they operate sophisticated marketing campaigns aimed directly at children.

Nationwide, more than 40 states sued the tobacco companies. Four states - Mississippi, Florida, Texas and Minnesota - already have settled with tobacco companies. The new settlement provides the most comprehensive package of public health reforms to date. The negotiating team said they believe strong state cases against the tobacco industry led to the settlement proposal and that a national settlement will avoid an inconsistent patchwork of reform which could result if each state individually pursued its lawsuit.

In announcing the settlement, the negotiating team said it should be viewed as the beginning, not the end, of tobacco reform in this country. The Attorneys General said this is litigation, not legislation, and that Congress should act to provide further essential reforms - including full Food and Drug Administration authority over tobacco.

**COMPLETE DETAILS OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT ARE**





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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Gregory Hojnowski**  
**November 13, 1998**  
**(702) 486-3783**

**TRIO OF LAS VEGANS INDICTED FOR INSURANCE FRAUD**

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit announced that two Las Vegas residents were indicted by the Clark County Grand Jury yesterday on felony insurance fraud charges related to a false car-jacking report. The Grand Jury indicted a third Las Vegan on charges related to submitting a forged document to support a claim for lost wages.

Antonio Franciscus Curry, 23, and Michael Wayne Brown, 24, are charged with falsely claiming that Curry's 1992 Cadillac DeVille was "car-jacked" at gun point in April of 1997. Curry fabricated the "car-jacking" scenario and utilized the "911" emergency system to report the non-existent crime. Curry then submitted a claim to Progressive Insurance Company seeking nearly \$14,000. Investigation revealed that the vehicle was actually being stored at a friend's house. Brown is alleged to have supported Curry's false claim.

In a separate matter, Lenon Daryl Horne, 31, is accused of submitting a forged document from an employer in support of his claim for lost wages. In July of 1997, Horne allegedly was injured at Mountasia Entertainment Center in Henderson and filed a subsequent claim for lost wages with Mountasia's insurer Lexington/Entertainment Insurance Company. Investigation revealed that the letter submitted by Horne was fraudulently created by Horne. In fact, Horne was not even employed by the company for whom he claimed to have worked.

A Grand Jury indictment is not a conviction of guilt but rather a finding that probable cause exists that the offenses were committed. If you suspect evidence of insurance fraud, please contact the Insurance Fraud Hotline at (800) 266-8688.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Matthew Gabe  
November 13, 1998  
(702) 486-3793**

**LAS VEGAN PLEADS GUILTY TO INVESTMENT SCAM**

Las Vegas - The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced today that Anthony J. Marino, age 60 of Rio Rancho, New Mexico, pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit securities fraud in connection with a scheme in which he defrauded numerous investors out of thousands of dollars.

According to the Criminal Information filed by the Bureau, Marino's scheme involved informing potential investors that he needed investment funds to expand his business, Coupon Company Inc. However, Marino failed to disclose the fact that the investment funds would actually be used for his own personal expenses.

The charge was the result of an investigation conducted by the Secretary of State, Securities Division.

As part of the negotiated guilty plea agreement, Marino paid \$40,935.00 in restitution to three victims. Marino was also sentenced to time already served by Judge Donald M. Mosley in Clark County District Court, Department XIV.

Persons who believe that they have been the victim of securities fraud should call the Securities Division in Las Vegas at 486-2440 or in Reno at 688-1855. In addition, consumer protection information is always available on the Attorney General's website at: <http://ag.state.nv.us/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**

**November 12, 1998**

**(702) 687-3512**

**NEVADA A.G. SUPPORTS PROPOSED RULES TO HELP FIGHT  
PHONE FRAUD**

In an effort to help better protect consumers from slamming and cramming, the Nevada Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection signed on to comments to the FCC urging that agency to implement rules that ensure consumers receive thorough, accurate, and understandable telephone bills. Nevada was one of twenty-one states that joined the comments which were filed with the FCC today in response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding Truth-in-Billing and Billing Format.

Slamming is the practice of illegally switching a consumer's long distance telephone service to another company without the customer's knowledge or consent. Cramming is the illegal practice of placing charges for unauthorized services on a consumer's telephone bill. This type of fraud costs consumers nationwide many millions of dollars each year.

The attorneys general's comments seek rulemaking that would help better protect consumers who may not realize they have been billed for unauthorized goods or services, or who may pay for unordered goods or services because they believe they risk disconnection of basic telephone services if they do not pay.

The comments also ask for changes that would require a full non-misleading description of all charges and complete information regarding the identity of the service provider responsible for each charge. This will help consumers make a complaint and get a correction if they have been wrongfully charged.

Last July, Nevada's Bureau of Consumer Protection issued a consumer protection pamphlet on phone cramming. The Attorney General's pamphlet, "Cramming...What Can You Do?," offers tips to help consumers avoid being crammed, discusses the rights of consumers and explains what to do if consumers discover unauthorized charges on their phone bill.

To obtain a copy of the pamphlet, contact the office of the Attorney General in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420, in Reno at (702) 688-1818 or in Carson City at (702) 687-6300. The pamphlet is also available on the Attorney General's website at: <http://ag.state.nv.us/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**

**November 12, 1998**

**(702) 687-3512**

**ATTORNEYS GENERAL ASK PARENTS/CHILDREN TO TAKE  
PART IN TUNE OUT THE VIOLENCE DAY - WEDNESDAY,  
NOVEMBER 18, 1998**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa invites all parents and their children to participate in the second annual Tune Out the Violence Day on Wednesday, November 18, 1998. Attorneys General from across the country will be sponsoring the day to focus on the harmful effects of media violence on children and the importance of reducing children's exposure to such violence.

American children watch an average of three to four hours of television daily. Unfortunately, much of today's television programming is violent. Studies of the effects of TV violence have found that extensive viewing of television violence may cause children to become "immune" to the horror of violence, accept violence as a way to solve problems, and imitate the violence they observe on television.

Violence on television is not the only source for aggressive or violent behavior among children but it is a significant contributor. The impact of TV violence may be immediately evident, or may surface years later. Children can be affected even if the family atmosphere shows no tendency toward violence.

"It is no secret that children, fed with a diet of violence, often react by perpetuating that type of behavior," Del Papa said. "By the time the average American child graduates high school, he or she will have witnessed 200,000 acts of violence on television. Much of the music, videos, and computer games aimed at children contain the same high levels of violent content. We can help to provide kids with a healthier lifestyle by taking charge of media in their lives."

The National Association of Attorneys General, law enforcement community, experts from the American Medical Association, The National Institute on Media and the Family, as well as concerned teachers, parents, and students have partnered with COURT TV to produce a television program

focusing on the impact of media violence on our children.

This 60 minute show will air on Wednesday, November 18, 1998 at 4:00 p.m. (PST). It will air on COURT TV or your local cable channel as a "Choices and Consequences Special Presentation." (more)

The show will be repeated on Saturday, November 21, 1998, and Sunday, November 22, 1988, at 4:00 p.m. (PST) both days.

Here are some suggested ways in which parents can help protect children from excessive TV violence:

- Pay attention to the programs their children are watching. Watch some with them.
- Set limits on the amount of time they spend with the television.
- Point out that although the actor has not actually been hurt or killed, such violence in real life results in pain or death.
- Refuse to let the children see shows known to be violent, and change the channel or turn off the TV set when something offensive comes on, with an explanation of what is wrong with the program.
- Disapprove of the violent episodes in front of the children, stressing the belief that such behavior is not the best way to resolve a problem.
- To offset peer pressure among friends and classmates, contact other parents and agree to enforce similar rules about the length of time and type of program the children may watch.

Parents should also use these measures to prevent harmful effects from television in other areas such as racial or sexual stereotyping. The amount of time children watch TV, regardless of content, should be moderated, because it keeps children from other, more beneficial activities such as reading and playing with friends.

"We can all help provide kids with a healthier lifestyle by taking charge of the media in their lives," Del Papa said. "Talking with your kids about violent and unrealistic programs is an important way to start. Television can have a positive effect on youth if used correctly and if we all take steps to tune out the violence."

Other informational pamphlets available through the Attorney General's office that may be of interest to parents include "School Safety: A Message to the Community," and "Keeping Your Child Safe on the Information Highway: A Parent's Guide to the Internet."

For more information on these publications, Tune Out the Violence Day, or other statewide efforts to improve the quality of life for Nevada's youth, please visit the Attorney General's website at [:http://ag.state.nv.us/](http://ag.state.nv.us/)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**

**November 12, 1998**

**(702) 687-3512**

**NEVADA A.G. SUPPORTS PROPOSED RULES TO HELP FIGHT  
PHONE FRAUD**

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To obtain a copy of the pamphlet, contact the office of the Attorney General in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420, in Reno at (702) 688-1818 or in Carson City at (702) 687-6300. The pamphlet is also available on the Attorney General's website at: <http://ag.state.nv.us/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**  
**November 10, 1998**  
**(702) 687-3512**

**STATE RELEASES NEW DEADBEAT PARENTS "MOST WANTED"  
POSTER**

The Nevada Office of Child Support Enforcement and the Attorney General's office today released the latest in a series of "most wanted" posters featuring information and photographs about deadbeat parents.

The new poster features seven notable deadbeat parents (four of whom are repeats) whose whereabouts are unknown. This is the sixth poster in what has been a very successful campaign to help locate men and women wanted in Nevada for failure to pay child support.

"These posters have enabled the Child Support Enforcement Program of Nevada's Welfare Division to collect thousands of dollars in previously uncollectable money since the first poster was released in May 1996," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "This is money that goes directly to help the well-being of children in our state who rely on financial support from non-custodial parents."

The "wanted posters" are being distributed nationally to all Attorneys General and Offices of Child Support Enforcement; regionally, in the five border states, to every District Attorney, child support office, and to larger branches of the United States Postal Service; and, in Nevada, the poster is distributed to all state agencies, District Attorneys, Child Support Enforcement and most Post Offices.

Last May, the Attorney General's office released a new pamphlet offering information to help answer questions such as who receives child support, how to collect child support and how child support is enforced in Nevada. Copies of the pamphlet, "Tips for Collecting Child Support and Working with the Child Support Enforcement Program," are available by contacting the Attorney General's office in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3420, in Reno at (702) 688-1818 or in Carson City at (702) 687-4170. The pamphlet is also available on the Attorney General's website at: [www.state.nv.us/ag/](http://www.state.nv.us/ag/)

The Nevada Child Support Enforcement Program provides services including: location of absent parents; establishment of parentage; and collection and distribution of support payments. The Nevada Child Support Enforcement Program can be reached in Carson City by calling 687-4744 or in-state, toll free at 1-800-992-0900 and ask for the Support Enforcement Office. (more)

The following is a breakdown of information regarding the first five most wanted posters:

- 1) Released May 1996: 5 names with a total owed of \$124,455.16 4 found, one case closed.
- 2) Released October 1996: 8 names with a total owed of \$278,314.67 8 found
- 3) Released May 1997: 5 names with a total owed of \$87,624.52 1 found
- 4) Released October 1997: 9 names (4 repeats) with a total owed of \$305,895 4 found (including one repeat)
- 5) Released May 1998: 10 names (3 repeats) with a total owed of \$123,316.78 2 found Total collected as of August 1998: \$52,729.51

The names and descriptions of the seven most wanted individuals on the latest poster are:

- 1) Tomas Hauker Cowles: (repeat), Owes his two children \$48,925. DOB 7/6/60, age: 38; height: 6'0", weight: 160 lbs.; eyes: brown, hair: red; occupation: laborer; last known address: 4199 Canal Circle, Las Vegas; aka: Tomas H. Erlendsson.
- 2) John Lee Jones: (repeat), Owes his 2 children \$41,439.83. DOB 1/17/60, age: 38; height: 5'7", weight: 140 lbs.; eyes: brown, hair: black; occupation: kitchen worker; last known address: 609 Monroe St. #45, Las Vegas; aka Johnny Jones.
- 3) Francesco Stabile: (repeat), Owes his 1 child \$36,726. DOB: 1/18/43, age: 55; height: 5'7", weight: 240 lbs.; eyes: brown, hair: brown; features: "devil" tattoo on right arm, "eagle" tattoo on left arm; occupation: waiter; last address: 3080 Ocotillo Ct., Las Vegas.
- 4) Morgan Nhalpo: (repeat), Owes his 2 children \$32,110. DOB: 2/21/53, age: 45; height: 5'11", weight: 160 lbs.; eyes: brown, hair: black; occupation: stagehand, food handler; last address: 101 Dogwood St., Henderson.
- 5) Randall Jame Luna: Owes his 5 children \$27,274.33. DOB 4/21/62, age: 36; height: 5'10", weight: 150 lbs.; eyes: blue, hair: blonde; occupation: carnival worker (formerly a land surveyor); features: scar on knee; last address: 1123 W. Orchard, Nampa, Idaho (moves around with carnival).

6) Charles William Spicer III: Owes his 1 child \$23, 672.81. DOB: 7/21/57, age: 41; height: 5'10", weight 190 lbs.; eyes: brown, hair: brown; occupation: mechanic; features: various tattoos on both arms; last address: 600 Newport Lane, Reno.

7) Harry T. Carlson: Owes his 2 children \$11,106.19. DOB: 7/9/45, age: 53; height: 6'3", weight: 210 lbs.; eyes: blue, hair: brown; occupation: pest control exterminator; features: birth mark on back; last address: Star Valley Motel, HC Box 45-A, Payson, Arizona.

This information, along with pictures of the most wanted deadbeat parents, is also available from the Attorney General's website: <http://ag.state.nv.us/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Richard Linstrom  
November 9, 1998  
(702) 486-3789**

**CONSUMER CALL LEADS TO BREAK-UP OF TELEMARKETING  
RING**

Carson City- Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that a tip from a rural Nevada consumer has led to the break-up of a telemarketing ring which operated out of Canada and victimized thousands of Americans.

Ronald B. Garner, also known as Paul Wilson, age 53, was arrested by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Toronto on November 3, 1998. The arrest was the result of a cooperative effort between the R.C.M.P. and the Bureau of Consumer Protection of the Nevada Attorney General's office.

The investigation began in October after a resident of McGill, Nevada notified the Bureau that he had just sent a \$1,000 cashier's check to a company identified as "Capital Premium Center" in North York, Ontario, Canada. The victim said he had been contacted by Capitol Premium Center and told that he had won a new Ford Taurus and \$25,000 in a sweepstakes. He was then told that before the limousine could arrive to deliver his prize and take him to the local Ford dealer, he had to pay a \$1,826.73 "advance customs fee." The McGill resident sent the \$1,000 check as part payment of that "fee" then decided to contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection.

Investigators from the Bureau of Consumer Protection notified the R.C.M.P. and arranged to have the Nevadan's check intercepted at an address in Toronto. The Bureau then sent another check, purporting to be from the victim's nephew. Garner was arrested when he arrived to pick up the second check. Subsequently, several accomplices were also arrested.

In the weeks between the initial contact with the R.C.M.P. and Garner's arrest, agents in Canada intercepted thousands of dollars sent by victims throughout the United States to the mail drop rented by "Capital Premium Center." Search warrants executed in conjunction with the arrest yielded information on a number of similar scams going by other names.

Garner was released on bail after his arrest. As in all criminal cases, the charges against the defendants are merely accusations. The defendants are to be considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

"The message to consumers is this: free means free," Del Papa said. "Legitimate contests cannot require payment in advance."

In February, Del Papa, along with attorneys general from the Western United States and Canadian Provinces announced a coordinated international strategy to crack down on the growing problem of cross-border telemarketing fraud.

The key elements of that strategy are:

- -Find more effective ways to unplug phone lines used by fraudulent telemarketers.
- -Set up expanded and continuing joint sting operations aimed at shutting down fraudulent operators.
- -Increase training of investigators and prosecutors on techniques to criminally prosecute fraudulent telemarketers.
- -Find new options for criminal investigations and prosecutions of telemarketing fraud.

The strategy is consistent with the findings of the U.S./Canada Task Force on Telemarketing that reported to President Clinton and Prime Minister Jean Chretien last year.

Consumers with questions or concerns about telemarketing fraud may contact the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection. In Las Vegas call (702) 486-3786, in Carson City call (702) 687-6300, and in Reno call (702) 688-1958. Or visit the Attorney General's website at <http://ag.state.nv.us/>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: GREGORY R. HOJNOWSKI  
November 6, 1998  
(702) 486-3783**

**"SLIP AND FALL" FRAUD LANDS DETROIT MAN IN PRISON**

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit announced that Bryan Christopher Ballog, age 38 of Detroit, Michigan, was sentenced today in Clark County District Court to thirty-four months in the Nevada State Prison for making a false claim for insurance benefits.

In December of 1995, Ballog, who has a long history of fraudulent behavior, staged a "slip and fall" in the washroom at J. C. Penney's at the Meadows Mall. Faking injury, Ballog was transported to University Medical Center and later made a claim for injuries to Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, insurer of J. C. Penney.

On September 23, 1998, Ballog pled guilty to making a false claim for insurance benefits.

At today's sentencing, Clark County District Judge Donald M. Mosley rejected the recommendation of probation from the Department of Parole and Probation and concurred with a request for incarceration from Deputy Attorney General Gregory R. Hojnowski of the Insurance Fraud Unit. Judge Mosley ordered that Ballog serve a minimum one-year term before being eligible for parole.

"This sentence by Judge Mosley sends a clear message that insurance fraud is a serious crime," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "The citizens of Nevada pay for this type of fraudulent behavior through increased premiums and higher cost of goods and services."

In addition to prison, Ballog will be required to reimburse the State of Nevada the cost of his extradition, nearly \$3,000.

Ballog's accomplice, James Andrew Duna, remains a fugitive, with an outstanding warrant for his arrest of \$45,000. Anyone with information regarding the location of Duna, or evidence of insurance fraud, should please contact the Insurance Fraud Hotline at: (800) 266-8688.





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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Grenville Pridham  
November 6, 1998  
(702) 486-3788**

**RUNNER FOR TELEMARKETER CONVICTED**

Las Vegas -- The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced that Sheri Annette Price, age 24 of Bellflower, California, was sentenced today by Clark County District Court Judge Joseph Pavlikowski for her role in a fraudulent telemarketing scheme which targeted an elderly victim in California. Price pled guilty to attempting to obtain money under false pretenses on August 27, 1998.

The victim was contacted by an accomplice of Price who said that he was calling from the legal department of Continental Security Exchange in Las Vegas. The victim was told that she had won more than \$4,200 but needed to send a total of \$1,200 up-front in order to collect the award. The victim was instructed to send the money via Western Union to Sheri Price in Las Vegas, who was supposed to be the Registrar or local agent of Continental Security Exchange.

The victim notified law enforcement of the scheme and the Southern Nevada Telemarketing Task Force set up surveillance on the pick-up location. The Southern Nevada Telemarketing Task Force is a joint effort by the Office of the Nevada Attorney General, U.S. Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the United States Postal Inspectors.

Judge Pavlikowski sentenced Price to a maximum term of 32 months and suspended the sentence, placing Price on probation. Price will return to California where she will serve her probation. Price was further ordered to pay restitution of \$1,972; \$22 to the victim of the attempt and \$1,950 to a victim in another case that was consolidated with the plea negotiation in this case.

"It is illegal to require a consumer to pay money in advance to collect a prize," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "It is also illegal for purported 'Recovery Services' to ask for or require a consumer to pay money in advance when the 'Recovery Service' claims that it has recovered money for a victim who has already sustained losses from earlier telemarketing fraud."

If a fraudulent telemarketer has contacted you or you have been the victim of a telemarketing fraud scheme, contact the Attorney General's Fraud Hotline in Las Vegas at 486-3777. Or contact the Attorney General's office statewide by calling Nevada's toll-free switchboard at 1-800-992-0900.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Bob Harmon**

**November 5, 1998**

**(702) 687-3512**

**DEL PAPA APPOINTS NEW FIRST ASSISTANT AND NEW LAS  
VEGAS CHIEF**

Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today the appointment of Tom Patton as First Assistant Attorney General and Richard Linstrom as Chief Deputy Attorney General in charge of the Las Vegas Office.

Patton assumes his new post after serving a year and a half as Chairman of the Nevada Parole Board. Patton earned his law degree from the University of California at Davis in 1989. Patton began his legal career in Nevada as a law clerk to then-Chief Justice Cliff Young and served three additional years as a Nevada Supreme Court staff attorney. From 1993 to 1997, Patton served as a Deputy Attorney General. During that time, Patton drafted the Attorney General's original guidelines for sex offender community notification as well as the 1996 Governor's Criminal Justice Task Force report, "Improving the Criminal Justice System in Nevada." Patton has resided in Carson City for eight years.

The First Assistant Attorney General serves as the chief assistant to the Attorney General and carries out the duties and responsibilities designated by the Attorney General. The First Assistant provides counsel to the Attorney General and assists the Attorney General in the day-to-day administration of the office. Patton replaces Brooke Nielsen who left the office to take a position as associate counsel for the state's University and Community College System.

Linstrom has been with the Las Vegas Office of the Attorney General since 1995 and most recently served as Director of the Telemarketing, Consumer Fraud, and Securities Unit of the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection. Linstrom earned his law degree from the University of San Francisco in 1982 and was a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and the principal of his own law office in Hawaii before he and his wife Mie moved to Nevada.

The Las Vegas Chief Deputy oversees the management of the Las Vegas office in conjunction with the

Attorney General and the First Assistant Attorney General. The Las Vegas Chief Deputy also serves as the attorney for the Eighth Judicial District Court (Clark County) and its judges. Linstrom will continue to prosecute health care fraud cases statewide. Linstrom replaces Don Haight who will be leaving to pursue other interests.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Jo Ann Gibbs**

**November 2, 1998**

**(702) 486-3129**

**MAY DEPARTMENT STORES AGREE TO PAY \$22 MILLION IN  
NATIONWIDE SETTLEMENT FOR IMPROPER DEBT COLLECTIONS**

**NEVADA CONSUMERS TO RECEIVE \$150,000 IN  
REIMBURSEMENTS**

The Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection announced today that May Department Stores Company has agreed to pay approximately \$22 million to consumers and state attorneys general nationwide as part of a multi-state settlement arising out of an investigation of unlawful debt collection practices.

A multi-state investigation by attorneys general confirmed that May Department Stores, owner of Robinsons-May and other retail stores nationwide, violated state consumer protection law and the U.S. Bankruptcy Code. According to the investigation, May Department Stores solicited customers who had filed Chapter 7 bankruptcy to sign an agreement to repay debts that were dismissed in bankruptcy. May Department Stores also failed to file those agreements with the Bankruptcy Court, as required by federal law.

As part of the settlement, May Department Stores agreed to pay approximately \$15 million to reimburse over 30,000 customers nationwide. May will also pay an additional \$7 million in civil penalties, costs, and funding for consumer protection and education programs to the states attorneys general.

"Approximately \$150,000 in reimbursements will be distributed among affected Nevada consumers," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "Affected consumers will also receive the benefit of having their outstanding balances removed. In addition, May Department Stores will pay the Nevada Attorney General's office approximately \$70,000 as the state's share of the \$7 million which will be paid to attorneys general nationwide. Nevada's payment is based upon the percentage of violations which

occurred in this state."

Under the settlement, any affected customers identified by May (using a process overseen by the attorneys general), or identified through a claims process, will:

- have all their "reaffirmed" debt stricken and May will waive any rights to repossess the merchandise.
- be reimbursed for finance charges and penalties charged by May, and be reimbursed for any moneys paid on the reaffirmed debt plus 8% compound interest.
- receive an additional payment equal to 10% of the amount they paid to May on the reaffirmed debt.

Consumers who have filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy may choose to enter into a "reaffirmation agreement" in which the Chapter 7 debtor agrees to repay a debt that would otherwise be discharged in bankruptcy. However, those agreements are valid only if they are entered into voluntarily and if they are filed with, and sometimes approved by, the bankruptcy court.

Improper reaffirmation practices by May Department Stores first came to light when the attorneys general investigated and settled a similar claim against Sears in 1997. Following the Sears settlement, May cooperated in the investigation and took steps to identify accounts of customers that had signed invalid reaffirmation agreements.

Consumers with questions regarding the state's settlement with May Department Stores Company may contact the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection. In Las Vegas call: (702) 486-3786, in Reno: (702) 688-1958, or in Carson City: (702) 687-6300.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Dave Neidert**

**November 2, 1998**

**(702) 687-4394**

**U.S. SUPREME COURT REJECTS CHALLENGE TO NEVADA'S  
"REASONABLE DOUBT" JURY INSTRUCTION LAW**

The Nevada Attorney General's office announced today that the Supreme Court of the United States has denied a petition which sought to challenge the constitutionality of Nevada's "reasonable doubt" jury instruction. The U.S. Supreme Court's denial of the petition, in the case of Ramirez v. Hatcher, allows a ruling by the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upholding the constitutionality of Nevada's "reasonable doubt" law to stand.

"This is a very important victory for the State of Nevada," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "The Ramirez case will now serve as a precedent, supporting the constitutionality of the state's "reasonable doubt" jury instruction in the Ninth Circuit. If this case had been lost, hundreds of criminal cases could have been impacted."

The Nevada Legislature adopted the current "reasonable doubt" instruction, NRS 175.211, in 1967 and decreed that only this instruction may be given in criminal cases. The jury instruction adopted by the Legislature had previously been upheld by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in Percifield v. United States. In 1987, Nevada's instruction was upheld by the Ninth Circuit in Darnell v. Swinney. However, in 1990, in Cage v. Louisiana, the United States Supreme Court, for the first time, declared Louisiana's "reasonable doubt" jury instruction unconstitutional. The Cage instruction is dissimilar to Nevada's, and the state's Supreme Court has consistently upheld Nevada's "reasonable doubt" instruction since the Cage ruling.

In Ramirez v. Hatcher, the federal public defender challenged Nevada's statutory definition of "reasonable doubt" in the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Two of the three judges on the Ramirez panel voted to uphold Nevada's instruction. A request for a rehearing and for a hearing of the case en banc were both denied by the Ninth Circuit.

The federal public defender then sought certiorari in the United States Supreme Court, which was denied.



**STATE OF NEVADA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Tim Terry**

**December 18, 1998**

**(702) 687-4704**

**LAS VEGAS HOME HEALTH NURSE INDICTED FOR MEDICAID  
FRAUD**

Carson City - Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa announced today that the Clark County Grand Jury has returned an indictment charging Scott L. Nellis, age 48, with five counts of Medicaid Fraud. The indictment alleges that Nellis, a home health care nurse, submitted false time records to two different Las Vegas home health agencies for whom he worked in late 1996. As a result, the businesses, American United Home Care and Creekside Home Health, Inc., submitted false claims to the Nevada Medicaid program for payment.

"According to the criminal indictment, Nellis made claims for treating different patients, at different locations, at the same time," Tim Terry, Director of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit, said.

A warrant has been issued for Nellis' arrest and bail has been set for \$15,000.

An indictment is merely an allegation of criminal wrongdoing and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

The Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit investigates and prosecutes allegations of fraud by medical providers in the Medicaid program throughout the state. Anyone suspecting provider fraud may report it to the following numbers: Carson City (775) 687-4704; Las Vegas (702) 486-3777; or Reno (775) 688-1870.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Richard Linstrom**

**December 11, 1998**

**(702) 486-3789**

**ABC'S 20/20 TO FEATURE A.G. CASE AGAINST "NATIONAL  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING COALITION"**

Reno - This Sunday, December 13, 1998, at 10:00 p.m. (PST), ABC's national news show 20/20 is scheduled to broadcast a story about a lawsuit filed by the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection against the Reno-based National Affordable Housing Coalition.

The Bureau filed the suit against National Affordable Housing Coalition, its owners, Craig R. Meyer and Linda L. Meyer, and its Chief Financial Officer, Scott Krieger, all of Reno, last April in Washoe District Court. Also named in the suit are non-Nevada residents Brian Wilkes, Rick Brown, David Shamey, Mark Gonzalves, and Gus Fernandez.

The suit alleges that since October 30, 1996, the defendants solicited the public through infomercials and radio ads to pay \$10 to attend seminars to learn how persons with poor credit and low incomes could buy a home in a short period of time. The seminars were held in at least 21 states.

According to the Attorney General's complaint, participants receive a motivational speech at these seminars combined with a sales pitch to join the defendants' home buyer's "network." The cost to join the home buyer's "network" is \$500, which the defendants say is refundable. The \$500 membership fee included admission to a home buyer's "workshop." Prospective members were allegedly told that at the "workshop" they would learn how to buy a home, regardless of their qualifications.

Instead, according to the complaint, the "workshops" consisted of various misrepresentations regarding the home buyer's "network." The misrepresentations included the availability of financing, the availability of pre-selected properties for purchase, credit counseling, free home warranties, and affiliation with government housing programs.

"The Bureau of Consumer Protection believes that some 15,000 to 20,000 memberships have been sold at \$500 each. Of those, no more than 900 members are reported to have purchased homes and most of those did so without the help of the National Affordable Housing Coalition," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "The Better Business Bureau in Reno has received over 300 complaints from across the country by persons who have been unable to obtain either the promised service or the promised refund from National Affordable Housing. Although some refunds have been obtained, the Consumer Protection Bureau believes that National Affordable Housing Coalition has discontinued processing refund requests."

In the civil suit, the Attorney General is requesting that a permanent injunction be issued against the defendants to prevent future deceptive advertising and trade practices. The suit also asks that the defendants be divested of their profits, that restitution be made to consumers, that each defendant pay a civil fine of \$2,500 for each deceptive act, and that the Bureau of Consumer Protection be compensated for its costs of investigation and prosecution.

Individuals with information concerning the activities of the National Affordable Housing Coalition, or the other defendants, are encouraged to contact the Nevada Attorney General's National Affordable Housing Coalition Hotline: (702) 688-1965, in Reno.

## **FRAUD PREVENTION TIPS**

In conjunction with Sunday's (December 13, 1998) scheduled 20/20 broadcast on the National Affordable Housing Coalition, the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection offers the following tips to help avoid becoming a victim of a financial crime. While the perpetrators of financial crimes and frauds are often accomplished sales persons or con artists, there are protective steps that can be taken before engaging in a transaction.

- **CHECK IT OUT BEFORE YOU SIGN:** Potential investors or customers should contact state regulators for the appropriate registration and/or licenses, and to see if any complaints are on file.
- **GET PROMISES IN WRITING:** Review written materials and documents carefully, and do some personal research by using a reputable accountant, lawyer, or other professional adviser. Shop around for price, quality and/or return on investment.
- **RESIST HIGH PRESSURE SALES:** It is a "red flag" for fraud when a salesperson says that you must decide immediately, without time for proper evaluation, in order to get a good deal, or participate in a particular opportunity.
- **NEVER SIGN A DOCUMENT YOU DO NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND:** You should know the meaning of each and every portion of a legal document. Remember, it is the written documents, not the verbal representations, that normally count in court.

- **RISK IS RELATED TO REWARD:** Even in legitimate business or investment propositions, higher risk usually means higher returns or lower prices. Know precisely how much risk you are taking and remember: if a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Use the resources available to check out any transaction before it is too late. In Nevada, contact state regulators such as the Financial Institutions Division, the Securities Division, the Consumer Affairs Division, and the Contractors Board. Don't forget to check with private organizations, such as the Better Business Bureau or a trade organization.

If you have already been the victim of fraud, contact the Attorney General's Bureau of Consumer Protection in Las Vegas at (702) 486-3769, in Reno at (702) 688-1958, or in Carson City at (702) 687-6300. The Bureau works with various public and private agencies to enforce Nevada's consumer protection laws.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**CONTACT: Gregory R. Hojnowski**  
**December 7, 1998**  
**(702) 486-3783**

**INSURANCE FRAUD RINGLEADER PLEADS GUILTY AGREES TO  
PAY RESTITUTION FOR HIS CRIMES**

The Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit announced today that Romar Delizo Bilog, age 38 of Los Angeles, pled guilty this morning to two felony counts of Conspiracy to Make False Claims For Insurance Benefits. Clark County District Court Judge Kathy A. Hardcastle set the formal sentencing for February 8, 1999.

According to the criminal complaint filed by the Attorney General's office, Bilog was the leader of an organized crime ring that would file insurance claims for nonexistent accidents.

"Bilog and his accomplices would recruit individuals from local casino lounges with the promise to make easy money," Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa said. "The recruits would then be provided with a script on how to file a claim with their insurance carriers, the location of the alleged accident (usually in Southern California), and the names of those who would later claim injuries from having been in the other vehicle. Recruits were typically paid from \$500 to \$1000 for their involvement."

Bilog and his group worked with a number of Los Angeles attorneys, who would then file claims for personal injuries and property damage with the insurance companies. Investigators estimate that the group collected at least \$400,000 from insurance companies through false claims from the nonexistent automobile accidents.

The National Insurance Crime Bureau's Special Agent Thomas Norton, along with the Attorney General's Insurance Fraud Unit and the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, conducted the undercover investigation against Bilog. The joint investigation led to the arrests and convictions of approximately 20 individuals in 1993.

"The cooperation between the insurance industry, our Insurance Fraud Unit, and local law enforcement made this operation successful," Del Papa said. Del Papa also expressed gratitude to the Police Department of Aurora, Illinois for their apprehension of Bilog this summer. Bilog had been a fugitive since 1993 when he fled Las Vegas after posting bail on the insurance fraud charges.

Bilog faces a maximum of 12 years in prison and up to \$10,000 in fines. As part of the plea agreement, Bilog has agreed to pay restitution of \$60,000 to the various insurance companies for his part in the fraud. Bilog has already reimbursed the State of Nevada nearly \$3,000 for the costs of his extradition.

Making false or inflated claims for insurance benefits is a felony in Nevada. If you have any knowledge of such fraudulent behavior, please contact the Insurance Fraud Hotline at 1-800-266-8688.