



News Release

Attorney General Robert E. Cooper, Jr.

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CONTACT: Sharon Curtis-Flair (AG)

(615) 741-5860

Chris Garrett (TDCI)

(615) 741-8589

ATTORNEY GENERAL WARNS OF FAKE HEALTH INSURANCE SCAMS

With unemployment rates still high and healthcare costs rising, one of the fastest-growing scams in the country is seemingly affordable health insurance plans that are worthless. Recent cases show Tennessee is no exception to this national problem and for that reason, Attorney General Bob Cooper and other state officials are warning consumers and small businesses to be careful they do not buy a bogus policy.

Tennessee officials warn consumers that the bogus policies are often promoted on what appear to be legitimate websites. Some of the worthless policies are promoted with extremely low rates, some as little as \$29.99 a month. Victims of the recession who may have little or no insurance and elderly people who may be especially vulnerable to more costly health problems are often targeted in the promotion of the fake insurance scams.

"If you buy into these ploys, you may be left with much more than a high medical bill," said Attorney General Cooper. "This can leave your credit score reeling, not to mention that someone may have access to your private information which can be used for other nefarious purposes."

"Always make sure an insurance agent and company is licensed by calling the Tennessee Insurance Division's Consumer Help Line at 1-800-342-4029 or by visiting www.tn.gov/commerce/insurance," said Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance Commissioner Leslie Newman.

Some suggestions Attorney General Cooper and other state insurance officials have include:

*Don't allow anyone to rush you into buying a plan without doing your homework.

*Beware when someone "guarantees" your acceptance into a program even with pre-existing medical conditions.

*Call the Department of Commerce and Insurance to make sure an insurance seller and its policies are legitimate.

*Get recommendations for good health insurance policies from family and friends.

If you have problems or complaints with a company regarding insurance, you can contact the Department of Commerce and Insurance at 615-741-2218 or 1-800-342-4029 or file a complaint by email at: <http://www.tennessee.gov/commerce/insurance/complaint.shtml>. Consumers who have complaints about any consumer matter should go online at to www.tn.gov/consumer/ or call the Division of Consumer Affairs at 615-741-2218 or toll-free in Tennessee at 1-800-342-8385.

You can contact the Better Business Bureau in your area by clicking on <http://www.bbb.org/us/find-a-bbb/> or file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission by going to its website at <http://www.ftc.gov/>.