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Attorney General DeWine Sues California Man for Operating Unfair Debt Settlement Operation

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(COLUMBUS, Ohio) – Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced a lawsuit against Jeremy Nelson of Trabuco Canyon, California, and his two companies for operating debt settlement businesses that took money from consumers to settle their debts but failed to deliver on their promises.

“We will take action to protect Ohioans from unfair business practices regardless of where the business is located,” DeWine said. “This individual operated businesses that promised to help settle consumers’ debts, told them to stop communicating with their creditors, and took upfront payment before providing any services. Ultimately he and his businesses failed to fulfill their promises and violated Ohio law.”

According to the Attorney General’s lawsuit, filed in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas, Jeremy Nelson is the president of Jackson Hunter Morris & Knight, a Nevada corporation that represents that its principal place of business is in Newport Beach, California. Mr. Nelson was also the president of Nelson Gamble & Associates, which previously was a Colorado corporation and represented that its principal place of business was in Irvine, California. Neither business was registered with the Ohio Secretary of State to do business in the state.

Through his businesses, Mr. Nelson advertised that his businesses could help consumers settle their debts. He advertised online and gave consumers the impression that they were getting professional services associated with legal counsel. Representatives told consumers over the phone that the business would negotiate with consumers’ creditors so that they could settle their debts by paying only a portion of what they owed. According to the Attorney General, consumers paid money for these services but did not have their debts settled.

The Attorney General’s lawsuit charges Jeremy Nelson and his businesses with violating Ohio’s Consumer Sales Practices Act and Debt Adjuster Act. Specific counts include failure to deliver, misrepresentation, and charging higher fees than Ohio law allows. Through the lawsuit, the Attorney General seeks injunctive relief, civil penalties, and consumer restitution.

“With the average American carrying thousands of dollars in credit card debt, debt settlement services can seem very appealing,” Attorney General DeWine said. “But far too many of these businesses fail to deliver on their promises and leave consumers in a worse financial situation.”

Consumers should beware of businesses that:

- Charge upfront fees over \$75;
- Do not provide copies of contracts;
- Tell consumers not to communicate with their creditors;
- Tell consumers they will get them a settlement that would be more favorable than consumers could obtain on their own.

Instead of paying high fees to debt settlement services, consumers should contact a nonprofit credit counseling service or work with their creditors directly to negotiate a payment plan.

Consumers who believe they have been treated unfairly should contact the Ohio Attorney General's Office at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov or by calling 800-282-0515.

Media Contacts

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Documents:

[Copy of lawsuit \(PDF\)](#)



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