



# NEWS

## R E L E A S E

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### **OXENDINE: PRISON TIME FOR PARTICIPANTS IN AUTO INSURANCE FRAUD RING**

**Atlanta** – Insurance Commissioner John W. Oxendine, U.S. Attorney Richard Deane and the FBI today announced that a former Atlanta area attorney has been sentenced for his part in a massive automobile insurance fraud ring.

Blaise Iwuogo, 37, of Duluth, was ordered to serve 41 months in prison, Commissioner Oxendine said. He was also ordered to pay \$533,298 in restitution and serve an additional three years of supervised release after he serves his prison sentence. Iwuogo was sentenced Monday afternoon in U.S. District Court in Atlanta.

In September another defendant, former chiropractor John C. Deveny, was ordered to serve 36 months in a federal prison, Commissioner Oxendine said. A U.S. District Court judge also ordered Deveny to pay restitution in the amount of \$280,866, and further ordered him to serve an additional three years of supervised release once his prison sentence is served.

Deveny owned and operated New Hope Chiropractic Center in Norcross. He was charged in a July 1999 federal indictment in connection with providing and submitting to insurance companies “many false documents” provided by other defendants who faked injuries from auto accidents that never occurred.

As an attorney, Iwuogo “represented” some of the fictitious claimants, Oxendine said.

The scheme that Deveny, Iwuogo and a dozen others participated in created phony auto accidents and defrauded a number of insurance companies, stealing millions of dollars from those insurers. The chiropractor was a key witness in the trials last year of others charged in a related case.

Deveny and Iwuogo are among a dozen defendants sentenced in recent weeks and ordered to pay a total of more than \$1.1 million in restitution for their part in the scheme.

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Sentenced last month in this case were: Nelson Baba, 12 months, 1 day prison sentence, \$122,441 restitution; Casimir Iwuogo, 46 months prison sentence, \$298,940 restitution; and Olushola Iwuogo, 20 months prison sentence, \$184,622 restitution.

Also in September, others were sentenced for their part in the ring: Cassandra Dent, 18 months in prison, \$255,496 restitution; Alfred Nibo, 34 months, \$346,849 restitution; Emmanuel Ifebor, 12 months, 1 day, \$306,275 restitution; Meg Edwards, 13 months, \$263,240 restitution; Helen Peters, 24 months, \$178,906 restitution; and Kate Iwuogo, eight months, \$83,414 restitution.

Nibo, of Jonesboro, is a former attorney with the firm Nibo and Associates. Ifebhor, of Lawrenceville, was part owner of Trust Motors, a used car dealership listed as prior owner of several of the vehicles used in the staged accidents. Casimir Iwuogo, of Lawrenceville, was also a part owner of Trust Motors.

Casimir Iwuogo fled the jurisdiction during his trial and remains at large. Two other defendants who have not yet faced trial – Abahili Peters and Catherine Chukworam – also remain at large. Photographs and descriptions of these fugitives are available by calling Commissioner Oxendine's Office at **(404) 656-2092**, or Mr. Deane's Office at **(404) 581-6016**.

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