



NEWS RELEASE

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INDICTMENTS BROUGHT IN AUGUSTA FRAUD CASE

Atlanta – Insurance Commissioner John W. Oxendine today announced that several suspects face insurance fraud and other charges in connection with staging automobile accidents in Augusta.

"I am committed to fighting fraud in Georgia," said Commissioner Oxendine. "Thanks to my investigators, we have taken these people off the streets."

According to investigators, Yvonne Louise Smith, 44, conspired with Emanuel Parker, 24, to stage a vehicle accident on April 1, 2008. Parker, driving a rented U-Haul, claimed that he accidentally rear-ended Smith's vehicle. In Smith's vehicle at the time were Smith, her daughter Fanesia Smith, her five-year-old granddaughter, and Ayisha Joe. Yvonne Smith and Parker submitted false insurance claims to the insurer of the U-Haul, Republic Western Insurance Company. If paid, the claims would have amounted to \$23,000.

In addition to insurance fraud, Smith and Parker are charged with reckless conduct and giving false statements.

During the investigation Smith also admitted to another staged accident involving a U-Haul on March 21, 2006. At that time more than \$10,000 in claims was paid. Smith and others also face charges in that incident, Oxendine said.

The indictments were handed down on July 28, in Richmond County Superior Court. Ashley Wright is Richmond County's District Attorney.

Insurance fraud is a felony with a penalty of two to 10 years in prison and/or a fine of up to \$10,000.

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