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Protecting Mississippi Consumers

Last week, we [announced multistate settlements](#) with automobile manufacturers Hyundai and Kia for their sale of millions of vehicles nationwide that lacked industry-standard, anti-theft technology, and with Mercedes-Benz USA and Daimler AG for violating state laws prohibiting unfair or deceptive trade practices by marketing, selling, and leasing vehicles equipped with undisclosed emissions defeat devices designed to deceive consumers.

Under the Hyundai and Kia settlement, the companies have agreed to equip all future vehicles sold in the United States with industry-standard, engine immobilizer anti-theft technology and provide up to \$4.5 million in restitution to eligible consumers whose cars are damaged by thieves.

In addition, consumers who previously installed the software update on their vehicles (or were scheduled to do so) but nonetheless experienced a theft or attempted theft of their vehicle on or after April 29, 2025, are eligible to file a claim for restitution for certain theft and attempted-theft related expenses. The companies will also offer free zinc-reinforced ignition cylinder protectors to owners or lessees of eligible vehicles, including vehicles that previously were only eligible for the company's software updates.

The Mercedes consumer relief program extends to the estimated 39,565 vehicles that had not been repaired or permanently removed from the road in the United States by August 1, 2023. Mercedes must bear the cost of installing approved emission modification software on each of the affected vehicles. The companies must provide participating consumers with an extended warranty and will pay consumers \$2,000 per subject vehicle.

For more information about eligibility and how to submit a claim for compensation, please visit the following:

For Hyundai – Visit www.HKMultistateimmobilizersettlement.com

For Kia – Visit <https://customercare.kiausa.com/SWLD> or call (800) 333-4Kia (4542)



Fighting Against Child Exploitation

In just the first 11 months of this year, our Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force received 12,105 tips of child exploitation online. Child sexual abuse is a horrific crime that does extraordinary physical, mental, and emotional damage to the victim. My office is proud to investigate and prosecute these crimes and remove predators from our streets, like in these two recent cases.

[Keith Blame Clifton](#) was sentenced to 20 years in federal prison and five years supervised release for one count of Production of Child Sexual Abuse Material and one count of Distribution of Child Sexual Abuse Material. The investigation into Clifton uncovered more than 1,000 images of child sexual abuse.

[Erret Jae James Jr.](#) was sentenced to 90 years in the custody of MDOC for one count of Distribution of Child Sexual Exploitation Materials and two counts of Possession of Child Sexual Exploitation Material. Both of these men will be required to serve their sentences day-for-day, without the possibility of parole.



Protecting Your Privacy from Robocalls

This month, I was proud to launch with my AG colleagues Phase II of [Operation Robocall Roundup](#), a multistate effort by the Anti-Robocall Litigation Task Force to crack down on robocalls across the country. As part of an ongoing investigation, we directed Inteliquent, Bandwidth, Lumen, and Peerless to stop transmitting suspected illegal robocalls across their networks. More than 1 billion imposter Amazon and Apple robocalls and more than 3 billion imposter IRS and Social Security calls moved through these 4 companies' networks over 3-4 years.

In Phase 1 of Operation Robocall Roundup, we sent warning letters to 37 smaller voice providers that were allowing suspected illegal robocalls onto the U.S. telephone network. As a result, the FCC removed 13 of the companies from its Robocall Mitigation Database, meaning no provider in the United States may accept their call traffic. In addition, 4 of the companies terminated their high-risk customer accounts and 19 are no longer appearing in Task Force traceback results, indicating that they have ceased routing suspected illegal robocalls.

On average, people receive more than 13 robocalls every day. They are annoying and disruptive to our everyday lives, but they are often used to perpetrate scams. We are protecting you from these unsolicited calls and holding these companies that facilitate them accountable.



Keeping Your Money and Local Businesses Safe

The Attorney General's Cyber Fraud Task Force is responsible for recovering \$2.6 million in victim funds for Mississippi citizens. Fraud is not a victimless crime, it hurts hardworking individuals and businesses in our communities. I am thankful to the incredible team at the Attorney General's Office and our partners for ensuring that justice was served for each of these four perpetrators.

[Giovanni Iortoman](#) and [Antonio Rafaila](#), two Romanian nationals, were part of a credit card skimming scheme in central Mississippi. Iortoman was sentenced to 12 months in federal prison and Rafaila was sentenced to 9 months in federal prison, as well as one year of supervised release. Both men were ordered to pay \$1,911 in restitution to the retailers that were victims and will be subject to deportation upon their release.

[Kiana Rochelle Cooper](#) was sentenced to 10 years in the custody of MDOC for one count of False Pretenses. Cooper, a former employee of LoanMax Title Loans, knowingly filed fraudulent loans using the stolen personal identity information of others.

[Loredana Gianina Sava](#), a Romanian national, was sentenced to 6 months in federal prison for one count of Wire Fraud. Sava could be seen on surveillance video at

various stores in the Jackson metro area requesting wire transfers using sleight-of-hand quick change techniques to trick cashiers. These schemes often use a distraction to pocket cash while also getting the correct change for the original large bill, getting away with more money than they started with. Sava entered the country illegally and will be subject to deportation upon release from prison.



Protecting the Integrity of Our Elections

This month, [we announced the sentencing](#) of Bobbie Jean Peoples of Greenwood, Mississippi, for one count of Transmission of a Ballot Mailed to Another. This case was investigated and prosecuted by the Mississippi Attorney General's Office.

In July 2023, Peoples knowingly collected and transmitted a ballot mailed to another person when she was not authorized by law to do so. On December 2, 2025, Leflore County Justice Court **Judge Jim Campbell** sentenced Peoples to six months in the custody of MDOC, with time suspended, and a fine of \$2,718.75.

During the 2025 Legislative Session, we worked with **Representative Noah Sanford** to pass legislation to strengthen Mississippi's ballot harvesting laws, making it a criminal offense to harvest an absentee ballot with the intent of **not** having it counted in the election. H.B. 724 was signed into law on March 21, 2025.



Nearly \$1 Million Awarded to Organizations Helping Human Trafficking Victims

[In December](#), my office announced the distribution of nearly \$1 million from the Victims of Human Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation Fund to eight organizations that help human trafficking victims become survivors. This is the fourth round of grants from the Fund since the Mississippi Legislature created it in the 2020 Legislative Session. This year's awards bring the total distributed for human trafficking victim services to \$9.5 million.

Working together, we can put an end to human trafficking in our State. Mississippi is blessed with many organizations, including these eight, committed to walking alongside victims on their journey to find healing. I am grateful to the Fund Committee's dedication to ensuring these organizations have the resources they need to support these individuals as they work to rebuild their lives.

More information on the application and solicitation, Fund rules, and other information related to this distribution and the Fund in general can be found on my [website](#). In total, the Fund received 16 applications during this funding period, with projects totaling nearly \$5 million.



Hosting the 4th Annual Scout Out Opioids

Last month, the Attorney General's Office, in collaboration with the Andrew Jackson Council of the Boy Scouts of America, [hosted Scout Out Opioids](#), a program to raise awareness with Scouts and their families of the dangers of opioids and offer techniques for reducing opioid abuse and misuse for them and their loved ones.

Together we can ensure that young people are aware of the dangerous consequences of opioids and equipped with the tools they need to save the lives of those around them.

Early education is key to preventing the misuse of these dangerous drugs. Thank you to the Boy Scouts of America for partnering with us and investing in the next generation of leaders.

As part of Scout Out Opioids, Scouts attending Winter Camp at Hood Scout Reservation heard from staff from the Attorney General's Office on opioid addiction and abuse. Additionally, Scouts wrote letters offering their support to families throughout Mississippi who have lost loved ones due to the opioid crisis. For their participation, all Scouts received a Scout Out Opioids patch.



Fighting the Opioid Epidemic

This month, the Mississippi Opioid Settlement Fund Advisory Council [sent its list of recommended grant recipients](#) to the Legislature for their consideration, pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) No. 2767.

The opioid epidemic has claimed far too many lives in Mississippi. Working together, we are confronting the damage already done and putting in place the programs and resources that will prevent such senseless harm in the future. Thank you to the Council for their hard work over the last eight months. We look forward to continuing our mission addressing opioid abuse in the years to come.

During this process, the Council carefully balanced the various interests of the State, including appropriate stewardship of public dollars, compliance with the terms of the opioid settlement agreements, and strategic use of the settlement funds to assist the State in addressing the serious health and safety issues created by the opioid epidemic. In total, 127 applications were received and reviewed by the 37 member Council. Upon evaluation of the applications, the Council assigned them to five tiers, with those in tier one representing the highest level of recommendation. Applicants included state and local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and corporate entities throughout the State.



The General Insider will return in January 2026. On behalf of the Attorney General's Office, we wish you and your family all the blessings, peace, and joy of the holidays.

May God bless you,

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