

## Agent scams seniors out of more than \$2 million

CA GOV - Department of Insurance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (#073)NEWS RELEASEAgent scams seniors out of more than \$2 millionDepartment of Insurance asks additional victims to come forward PALM DESERT, Calif. – John Paul Slawinski, 59, was arrested at his home in Palm Desert on July 29, and is being arraigned on Friday, August 1, at 1:30 p.m. at the Riverside Hall of Justice, Department 411, 4100 Main St, Riverside.Slawinski is charged with five felony counts of financial elder abuse and five counts of burglary for allegedly ripping off five senior citizens for more than \$2 million through the sale and surrender of investment annuity products. Bail is set at \$2,000,000. An investigation was launched by the Department of Insurance after receiving complaints regarding Slawinski's business practices involving the sale and surrender of annuity products. Investigators allege that Slawinski, a licensed insurance agent, convinced some victims to surrender annuities and investment products with the promise of higher returns through new investments and conned other victims into giving him money to invest for them. Slawinski did not purchase annuities or investment products, nor did he refund the victims' money."I find it particularly appalling when people in the position of trust violate that trust and take advantage of vulnerable senior citizens," said Commissioner Dave Jones. "Consumers should be able to trust their agent when making important insurance decisions. Consumers often rely on the advice of their agent when they are taken advantage of the result is often devastating."Slawinski concealed his theft by providing the victims with fraudulent financial statements, and by issuing minimum investment payments to lead them to believe their insurance investment and life savings were secure.The Department of Insurance is looking for additional victims in this case and encourages anyone that may have done business with Slawinski and/or JPS Insurance Services to contact the Rancho Cucamonga Regional Office at (909) 919-2200.The Riverside County District Attorney's Office – Elder Abuse Unit is prosecuting the case. This case is being investigated and prosecuted under the Life and Annuity Consumer Protection Program (LACPP). LACPP provides grant funds to counties for the prosecution of financial abuse in life insurance and annuity product transactions.Media Notes:Slawinski's insurance license was revoked on June 13, 2014

<http://www20.insurance.ca.gov/epubacc/ORDER/214810.htm> Financial Elder Abuse-Penal Code Section 368(d)(1); Burglary-Burglary, Penal Code Section 459. Charges against Slawinski include crime enhancements alleging theft greater than \$500,000, pursuant to Penal Code Section 186.11. The California Department of Insurance, established in 1868, is the largest consumer protection agency in California, regulating the \$123 billion insurance marketplace. In 2013 the California Department of Insurance received more than 170,000 calls from consumers and helped recover over \$63 million in claims and premiums. Please visit the Department of Insurance web site at [www.insurance.ca.gov](http://www.insurance.ca.gov). Non-media inquiries should be directed to the Consumer Hotline at 800.927.HELP or 213.897.8921. Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf (TDD), please dial 800.482.4833.