



PRESS RELEASE

Unlicensed Bail Bondsman Sentenced to 7 Years in Prison

BALTIMORE, MD (February 11, 2019) - Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today announced today that Thomas Christopher Wengert, 47, of Pasadena, was sentenced to 15 years' incarceration, with all but five years suspended, on one count of acting as a licensed insurance agent; and 2 years incarceration on one count of theft of at least \$10,000 but less than \$100,000. Anne Arundel County Circuit Court Judge Michael Wachs ordered the sentences to run consecutively. Judge Wachs also ordered Wengert to serve 5 years of supervised probation upon release and to pay restitution in the amount of \$18,400.

On January 19, 2019, Wengert entered an Alford plea to both crimes. In March 2017, Wengert, although unlicensed, represented himself as a bail bondsman to both an attorney and the victim. The victim gave Wengert \$18,000 to post as bail for her husband's release from jail. Wengert did not post the bail, nor did he return the money to the victim.

In 2017, in another case, Wengert was convicted of acting as a licensed insurance agent and sentenced to serve 30 days in the Anne Arundel County detention center. However, 9 days prior to serving his sentence, Wengert stole the \$18,000 in this case. In addition to requiring Wengert to repay \$18,000 in restitution, the Judge ordered Wengert to repay an additional \$400 to a second victim. While Wengert was in jail serving his 30 day sentence, he convinced a fellow inmate that he was a bail bondsman and could post bond for him upon his own release. Shortly after Wengert's release from jail, again while posing as a bail bondsman, he received \$400 from the inmate's wife and never posted the bail.

"Mr. Wengert is a serial offender and preyed upon victims who were in difficult circumstances," said Attorney General Frosh. "The money he stole from his victims will be returned and he will serve an appropriate sentence for his crimes."

In making today's announcement, Attorney General Frosh thanked Assistant Attorney General Jerry E. Jones who prosecuted the case and Thomas Zanfardino, Suzanne Jones, and Nancy Brown, investigators with the Maryland Insurance Administration.