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Attorney General Frosh Announces Settlement with Frederick County Furniture Sellers
Companies and their Owners Ordered to Refund Payments Made for Unfulfilled Furniture Orders

BALTIMORE, MD (July 12, 2022) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh announced that his Consumer Protection Division has reached a settlement of the civil charges against Christopher Engel, Karol Engel, Matthew Dihel, MOCHA Furniture Limited Liability Company, Urbana custom décor Limited Liability Company, and Farmstead Custom Furniture LLC, who were, collectively, charged with violating the Consumer Protection Act for collecting deposits and other monies from consumers to build custom furniture, and then failing to either provide consumers their ordered goods or to refund their money. The companies were also accused of going out of business to avoid repaying consumers, only to reopen under new names.

The settlement requires the Engles, Dihel, and the companies to return to consumers all the money the consumers paid for furniture they did not receive or that was received but did not conform to their orders, as well as to pay penalties to the state. The settlement also prevents the companies and the Engles and Dihel from continuing to operate a business in Maryland that takes deposits from consumers without first providing a bond.

The Division alleged that the Engels took orders and deposits for custom furniture, misled consumers with false promises of delivery, and failed to deliver the furniture or provided furniture that was of worse quality than was advertised, and then failed to provide consumers’ owed refunds since at least late 2019. Dihel began participating in the scheme during subsequent iterations of the companies. The Engels and Dihel were also accused of misleading consumers each time they changed the business name and told consumers that the company the consumers had been doing business with no longer existed.

“Customers of the Engles, Dihel and their companies paid for high-quality, custom-built furniture. Some got nothing at all. Others received products that were significantly inferior to what they were promised,” said Attorney General Brian Frosh. “Consumers who were deceived by the respondents will be able to get their money back under this settlement.”
The settlement includes restitution to injured consumers, civil penalties, and strong protective measures to prevent future harm to Marylanders:

- Full restitution totaling at least $90,000 to consumers who paid deposits and other monies but who did not receive either furniture that fully conforms with their orders or a refund of the monies they paid;
- $65,000 in civil penalties, which increase to as much $200,000 if the Engels and/or Dihel fail to comply with the settlement agreement, including by failing to pay the full restitution amount; and
- Injunctive terms that enjoin the Engels and Dihel, as well as the companies, from further violations of the Consumer Protection Act, and prevent them in any future sales to consumers from taking deposits or other monies up front before delivering a product, unless they first post a $100,000 bond with the Division.

Consumers who are eligible for refunds will be contacted by the Attorney General’s Office. Consumers may also contact the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division at 410-576-6569 with questions.