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PRESS RELEASE

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Maryland Attorney General's Office Joins Effort Combatting Elder Financial Abuse

PROTECT Week 2023 Launches June 12

BALTIMORE, MD (June 12, 2023) – Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today joined other state officials and consumer protection groups to launch PROTECT Week, a statewide awareness and public education campaign focused on protecting older Americans and vulnerable adults from financial exploitation. PROTECT Week is an annual initiative anchored around Elder Abuse Awareness Day, June 15.

One in five seniors over age 65 have been the victims of fraud, losing a staggering \$2.9 billion a year to identity thieves and con artists. But there are resources available from the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division that provide important information to consumers on how to protect themselves and where to report fraud or abuse. Maryland consumers are encouraged to visit www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/Pages/seniors.aspx to learn about these resources.

“Our older Marylanders have dedicated their lives to raising families, building our communities, and growing our economy. They deserve to live with dignity and without fear of exploitation and abuse,” said Attorney General Anthony Brown. “These heartbreaking abuses can occur at the hands of trusted friends and family, as well as complete strangers. The best protection is information, which is why PROTECT Week is so important. My office provides resources to help seniors and vulnerable adults avoid scams and fraud, and to pursue asset recovery on behalf of those who have been exploited.”

The Attorney General's Office is also participating in these PROTECT Week events, which will provide important information to Marylanders on protecting their investments and how to prevent financial exploitation.

- **Online webinar.** *Keeping Investments Safe* with Melanie Lubin, Commissioner Securities Division, Office of the Attorney General. This informative video is available to view on AARP Maryland's Facebook channel: <https://www.facebook.com/aarpmid>.

- **Thursday, June 15: Teletown Hall.** The average victim of elder financial abuse loses upwards of \$120,000. Financial exploitation is the most common form of elder abuse. Learn how to prevent it and recognize the signs. Assistant Attorney General Karen Straughn, director of the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division's Mediation Unit, will join United States Attorney Erek Barron, Maryland Comptroller Brooke Lierman, and AARP Maryland for a live telephone town hall. **Noon to 1:00 p.m. ET.** Register online at <https://vekeo.com/event/aarpmaryland-82625/>.

<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2023/060723a.pdf>