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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier Charges Member of Cyberfraud Ring

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier's Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit charged a member of a cyberfraud ring for stealing more than \$50,000 from Floridians. Weikai Zhang faces multiple felony counts for operating a cyber scheme targeting Floridians with false online pop-up alerts and impersonating bank employees.

"This cyber fraudster exploited Floridians, including a senior, and stole tens of thousands of dollars," said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "This will not be allowed to stand in Florida. Thanks to the hard work of our Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit, our Statewide Prosecutors will be able to hold this cybercriminal accountable."

The investigation began after an Orange County citizen filed a complaint about being scammed out of \$23,000 from a combination of a false pop-up alert and bank employee imposters. The investigation found that Zhang convinced the victim that his bank account was compromised, then attempted to have the victim send funds to redeposit into a so-called safe account using three different cryptocurrency kiosks (also known as Bitcoin ATMs). When this attempt failed, Zhang traveled in person, impersonating a bank employee, to collect \$23,000 in cash, as captured on a surveillance video.

Additionally, the investigation uncovered that Zhang perpetrated the same criminal activity against a senior woman. Zhang traveled from Central Florida to Martin County for the sole purpose of collecting \$30,000 cash from the victim as a result of the scam.

Zhang is charged with one count of organized scheme to defraud \$50,000 or more, a first-degree felony, one count of exploitation of a person 65 years or older \$10,000 or more but less than \$50,000, a second-degree felony, and one count of conspiracy to commit grand theft over \$20,000 but less than \$100,000, a third-degree felony.

Authorities arrested Zhang in New York, and Zhang is now in custody in Martin County. The Martin County Sheriff's Office, Florida Office of Financial Regulation, and the Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution's Cyber Fraud Enforcement Unit partnered for the investigation.

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