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# Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

## AG Moody Secures More Than $1M for Victims of Predatory HVAC Company




TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today secured potential consumer relief of more than $1 million to customers of an HVAC company that allegedly engaged in predatory sales and service practices. This is following an action filed by Attorney General Moody's Consumer Protection Division against Louis Bruno and his business Bruno, LLC, known as Bruno Total Home Performance and Bruno Air Conditioning, for alleged aggressive and deceptive sales practices that resulted in significant financial harm to Florida consumers. The majority of the impacted customers were seniors—including some living on fixed incomes. The deceptive practices involve alleged conduct, such as upselling unnecessary HVAC systems and setting up financing agreements with terms and liens on homes that consumers did not understand.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "We are securing relief valued at more than a million dollars for consumers who were taken advantage of by alleged deceptive HVAC sales tactics. This is an important resolution for hundreds of consumers, most of them seniors, who reported that they were preyed upon by the defendants."

If entered by the court, the proposed stipulated consent judgment will provide important injunctive relief that includes:

- A permanent ban against Bruno, LLC from conducting HVAC business in Florida;
- A permanent ban against Bruno from using any high-pressure, false or misleading statements while offering or providing HVAC services, including threatening to file liens, making false health claims, threatening to void a warranty and misrepresenting a binding agreement as an 'estimate';

- A requirement that Bruno provide consumers with a written copy of any agreement when consumers execute the agreement on a tablet or other electronic device;
- A prohibition against using non-disparagement clauses that restrict a consumer's ability to post negative reviews;
- A requirement to provide consumers with written information about the sales process so that a consumer can better identify whether a sales agent skipped a required step or did not get the required approvals at the right stage in the process; and
- A requirement that no work can commence before the financing company has confirmed that the consumer consents to all terms of the financing agreement.

The monetary relief identified in the consent judgment includes $100,000 in monetary relief to be paid to eligible consumers, more than $1.3 million in alleged outstanding payments due to defendants that they will not seek from consumers, at least $100,000 in lien releases, more than $50,000 in refunds paid to consumers, $25,000 in attorney's fees and $500,000 in suspended penalties.

To view the full complaint, click here.

To view the consent final judgment, click here.

Last month, to prevent more Floridians from falling victim to HVAC scams, Attorney General Moody created *Scams at a Glance: Keep Your Cool*.

The resource highlights tips on how to avoid being fooled by scammers, including:

- Become familiar with how HVAC systems operate, making it harder for a scammer to take advantage of lack of know-how;
- Obtain second opinions on repairs and sales quotes to ensure the first offer is not a scam;
- Be wary of high-pressure sales tactics; and
- Insist on a written agreement.

To access the resource, click here.

Floridians can report scams to Attorney General Moody's office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM, or by filing a complaint online at MyFloridaLegal.com. Complaints against contractors can also be filed with appropriate licensing authorities, including the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation and the applicable county contractor licensing board.