

# PRESS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release**

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**March 02, 2009** - Attorney General Kelly A. Ayotte and Insurance Commissioner Roger A. Sevigny today announced the conviction of Catherine Zdon for one count of Insurance Fraud relative to an insurance policy covering her diamond ring.

Zdon, age 49, of Derry, NH, pled guilty to one count of Insurance Fraud in the Rockingham County Superior Court. She was sentenced by Judge John M. Lewis to 6 months in the House of Corrections, with the entire sentence suspended for 3 years conditioned upon good behavior, apology letters written to her insurance agent and to the insurance company, and the payment of a \$1000 fine or the performance of community service in lieu of the fine.

The charges arose after Zdon informed her State Farm Fire and Casualty Company agent that her diamond ring was missing. Three days later, Zdon withdrew her insurance claim. Subsequently, an Insurance Department Fraud Unit investigator met with Zdon, and Zdon admitted to him that the ring had not been missing.

Attorney General Ayotte said “I am committed to ensuring that New Hampshire residents and businesses are not burdened with higher insurance premiums as a result of criminal conduct.” Commissioner Sevigny warned that “Insurance fraud is a serious crime that hurts everyone. When criminals steal money from an insurance company, they steal from all the company’s policyholders as well, and from a system that is in place to protect people from losses. Insurance fraud costs all of us money because it increases everyone’s premiums.”

The conviction is the result of a joint effort by the Attorney General’s Office and the Insurance Department Fraud Unit. The Fraud Unit was formed under RSA 417:23 to investigate insurance fraud and other insurance-related criminal activity. Fraud Unit Investigator Brendhan B. Harris conducted the Insurance Department’s investigation and the case was prosecuted by Attorney Catherine Tucker.

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