



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY McMASTER
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Two Residents of “Irish Travelers” Community Plead Guilty to Insurance Fraud

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that Tammy Ann Sherlock, 36, and Patrick Michael O'Hara, 19, both of 135 Murphy Street in North Augusta, pleaded guilty on Tuesday, August 16, 2005 to one (1) count each for Presenting a False Claim for Payment, a felony violation of §38-55-170 (1) of the Code of Laws, and punishable to ten (10) years imprisonment and a fine of up to five thousand (\$5,000) dollars.

On December 8, 2004, Tammy Sherlock presented to Progressive Northern Insurance Company that she had been involved in an accident with Patrick O'Hara on November 23, 2004 and that the accident was her fault. When the insurance company investigated the matter, they learned Patrick O'Hara had been involved in an accident earlier in the day on November 23, 2004.

In the actual accident, Patrick O'Hara was at fault, but it did not involve Tammy Sherlock. In fact, O'Hara's vehicle was damaged to the extent that it was inoperable. It had also incurred over \$5,000.00 worth of damage and it had to be towed away. The investigation revealed that the “accident” between Patrick O'Hara and Tammy Sherlock was made up in an attempt to collect the insurance proceeds from Progressive Northern. These defendants are half brother/sister and reside in the Murphy's Village area of North Augusta in Edgefield County.

The Murphy's Village area of North Augusta is well known for residents who are commonly referred to as “Irish Travelers.”

Judge Jackson Gregory, presiding over the General Sessions Court of Edgefield County, sentenced each defendant to 18 months in prison suspended on 18 months probation and 30 days community service.

This case was investigated by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) and prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office.

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