

## Phone in Fraud Case from Bahamas? Maryland Venue Bill Still can Allow Prosecutions

By: Targeted News Service

*Insurance-fraud prosecutions in Maryland just became easier thanks to a bill clarifying legal venues in which prosecutors can bring fraud cases, according to the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud. It overcomes a growing technology problem: fraudster use of cell phones and other mobile technology clouding whether the fraud crime happened in Maryland.*

The Coalition Against Insurance Fraud issued the following news release:

Insurance-fraud prosecutions in Maryland just became easier thanks to a bill clarifying legal venues in which prosecutors can bring fraud cases, according to the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud (<http://www.insurancefraud.org/index.htm>).

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley yesterday signed the measure into law. It overcomes a growing technology problem: fraudster use of cell phones and other mobile technology clouding whether the fraud crime happened in Maryland.

"More fraud cases will go to court because prosecutors can better connect a fraud crime to Maryland. Prosecutors have a legal umbilical cord that will land convictions even if the fraudster committed the crime with a cell call many miles from Maryland," says Dennis Jay, executive director of the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud.

Suspects can be tried in any county where: a) the insurance loss happened; b) the policy provides coverage; c) the insurer or agent received the false statements; and d) the fraudster received the stolen money.

Maryland thus joins only a handful of states with this approach of venue-clarifying to overcome mobile technology as a barrier to bringing cases, Jay says. It's a potentially effective model that other states with venue problems should consider.

"Prosecutors now can better prove Maryland jurisdiction with a clear set of legally defined venues. Maryland is wisely evolving with technology that has erected artificial barriers to bringing fraud cases to justice," Jay adds.

*"More fraud cases will go to court because prosecutors can better connect a fraud crime to Maryland. Prosecutors have a legal umbilical cord that will land convictions even if the fraudster committed the crime with a cell call many miles from Maryland," says Dennis Jay, executive director of the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud.*



**Coalition Against  
Insurance Fraud**

Swindlers often use cell phones to call in insurance scams against Maryland insurers and consumers from other states. Prosecutors sometimes have a hard time proving a clear Maryland connection to the crime. Courts reject many cases because prosecutors had a difficult time proving an all-important Maryland jurisdiction or venue.

The Coalition joined the Maryland Insurance Administration in testifying in support of the measure.

"Prosecutors now can better show that a Maryland fraud is, in fact, a Maryland fraud. More states must adapt to new technology's impact on venue its impact on fraud cases," Jay says.