

LISA MADIGAN  
ATTORNEY GENERAL



JESSE WHITE  
SECRETARY OF STATE

**For Immediate Release**  
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### **MADIGAN, WHITE: FINANCIAL ADVISOR SENTENCED FOR THEFT, FORGERY CONVICTION**

Chicago - Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Secretary of State Jesse White today announced that a Waukegan accountant and financial advisor has been sentenced to 8 ½ years in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) after defrauding several area senior citizens of investment money they entrusted to him.

On October 12, Lake County Circuit Court Judge John Phillips sentenced William Behrens, 43, of Kenosha, Wisconsin, on charges of Theft over \$100,000 and Forgery. Behrens pled guilty to these charges in June. He was taken into custody after sentencing.

“Defrauding someone with promises of financial gain is wrong in any case,” Madigan said. “It is a particularly egregious crime when committed against seniors who depend so greatly on their savings and investments during retirement.”

“Sadly, this is one of many cases of fraud against the elderly that my office is handling,” Secretary of State Jesse White said. “Smooth talking con artists befriend seniors, get their trust and then take all their money. Such fraudsters are counting on the fact that seniors will be afraid or too embarrassed to report the crime.”

Madigan said the charges arose out of Behrens’ converting checks for his own use that were intended to be invested on behalf of a 69 year old woman. The elderly woman lost more than \$224,000 in the scheme. Behrens also used more than \$25,000 of an 83 year old veteran’s money to pay back money he had taken from another investor. The World War II vet was unaware of the crime until he was contacted during the investigation.

Madigan and White urge all investors to contact the Secretary of State’s Securities Department to report suspected investment fraud and to check whether a broker is registered or has a disciplinary history at 1-800-628-7937 or by visiting the website [www.AvoidTheScam.net](http://www.AvoidTheScam.net)

Senior Assistant Attorney General Edward Snow prosecuted the case for Madigan's Financial Crimes Bureau. The case was investigated by the Secretary of State's Securities Division.

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