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**GALLAGHER ANNOUNCES STATEWIDE ARREST SWEEP
BY INSURANCE FRAUD INVESTIGATORS**

28 ARRESTED FOR VIOLATIONS OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION LAWS

TALLAHASSEE – Florida's Chief Financial Officer Tom Gallagher today announced 28 arrests in a three-day statewide sweep of suspects arrested for violations of workers' compensation laws. The sweep is the latest move in a campaign to root out those who cheat the workers compensation system, thus making it more expensive for honest employers to obtain coverage. The investigations and the arrests were carried out by detectives from the Division of Insurance Fraud, Bureau of Workers' Compensation Fraud, in the Department of Financial Services, which Gallagher oversees.

"Florida employers have seen their workers' compensation premiums drop for two years in a row and much of the credit for this relief goes to the Division of Insurance Fraud and the Division of Workers' Compensation," Gallagher said. "Employers and employees who cheat the system are stealing from those who play by the rules and putting them at a competitive disadvantage. We will continue our aggressive efforts to stamp out fraud and help save employers money."

The majority of the suspects were arrested in the early morning hours at their residences. The 28 individuals were arrested on a variety of counts including submitting fraudulent workers' compensation claims, forging workers' compensation documents or exemptions, violating orders to stop work until adequate coverage is obtained, and failure to secure coverage. Most of those arrested are facing third-degree felony charges, which carry a penalty of up to five years in prison per count. However, some individuals are facing charges that carry up to 30 years in prison, and some are on probation for prior violations.

Among those arrested was a claimant who alleged he was disabled following a 1993 on-the-job injury at Georgia Pacific Co. Jimmy Carr, 50, of Jacksonville, stated that he had to use crutches, a cane, a buggy or a wheel chair, and has been able to walk only in his yard or house without using one of these devices. But he was captured on surveillance video removing a basketball stand out of a truck and then shooting baskets. Carr is also captured on video standing on his own to take a wheelchair out of the rear of a vehicle and then sitting in it. He has collected more than \$800,000 in insurance benefits.

Also arrested this week was a former insurance agent on probation who continued to conduct insurance business under various unregistered company names – Blue Ocean Insurance Inc., MSG Consulting, G&G Consulting, or Grason Insurance Agency. Detectives said that on at least 20 documented occasions, Michael Stephen Grason, 65, of Winter Park, presented or caused others to present fraudulent documents to state workers' compensation compliance investigators, contractors and others as "verification" of workers compensation coverage.

This week's sweep is the department's latest effort to clean up the workers' compensation system. In April, investigators from the Division of Workers' Compensation conducted construction site sweeps in three Florida cities and made contact with over 900 businesses. Over 200 businesses or individuals were issued Stop Work Orders or ordered to produce records.

This year, the Division of Insurance Fraud, Bureau of Workers' Compensation Fraud, has presented more than 213 cases for prosecution.

The Department of Financial Services, Division of Insurance Fraud, investigates various forms of fraud in insurance, including health, life, auto, property and workers' compensation insurance. Anyone with information about this case or another possible fraud scheme should call the department's Fraud Hotline at 1-800-378-0445. A reward of up to \$25,000 may be offered for information leading to an arrest and conviction.

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Attached is a list of those arrested this week

DFS WORKERS' COMP FRAUD SWEEP ARRESTS

Timothy Dore, 30, 2132 Randor Road, Juno Beach – Presenting fraudulent workers compensation exemption form, failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Michael S. Grason, 65, 4333 Woodtree Lane, Orlando – Workers' compensation insurance fraud.

Barbara J. Martin, 40, 191 Woodrich Road, Crawfordville – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Sharon Meyer, 48, 16628 89th Place N., Loxahatchee – Workers' compensation fraud, grand theft second-degree.

Charles Michael Rucker, 50, 9309 Tuscany Drive, Tallahassee – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Renee Coates McNeill, 48, 6709 Visalia Place, Tallahassee – Workers' compensation fraud, forgery, and uttering a forged document.

Lee Moore, 47, 337 Baker Drive, West Palm Beach – Working without workers' compensation insurance.

Henry Norman, 43, West Palm Beach – Working without workers' compensation.

Jimmy Carr, 52, 21121 N. Highway 441, McIntosh – Workers' compensation fraud.

Christina S. Schlusemeyer, 63, 8000 NW 121st Ave., Ocala – Workers' compensation fraud.

Adrian Schexnaider, 48, last known address 2665 Bayshore Parkway, Milton – Workers' compensation fraud.

Roy John Tegtmeier, 51, 14280 Gorham Road, Pensacola – Workers' compensation fraud, uttering a forged document.

Philip W. Whitehead, 27, 803 Gregory Drive, Casselberry – Workers' compensation fraud, perjury.

Carlos Trejos, 35, 325 NW 72nd Ave., #306, Miami – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

John C. Carrera, 53, 12261 SW 94th St., Miami – Workers' compensation fraud, second-degree grand theft, and perjury.

James Lee Vergho, 47, 900 NW 10th St., Homestead – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Hector M. Gonzalez, 44, 831 NW 132nd Place, Miami – Uttering a forged instrument.

Jay David Marks, 55, 19255 NE 10th Ave., #417, Miami – Workers' compensation fraud by false document.

Alina S.F. Jones, 25, 1600 NW 4th Ave., #16-D, Miami – Workers' compensation fraud by false document.

Adolfo Villaraos, 62, 6140 SW 27th St., Miami – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Jorge Manuel Zaragozi, 48, 420 SW 18th Terrace, Miami – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Jorge Antonio Lara, 39, 14255 SW 290th Terrace, Miami – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Modesto Fernandez, 35, 7230 W. 14th Court, Hialeah – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Giovanni Picanno, 57, last known address 731 NE Carnival Ave., Port St. Lucie – Violation of Stop Work Order.

David Hadden, 38, 202 Essex Drive, Ft. Pierce – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Kenneth Sylvia, 42, 742 Flamingo Way, North Palm Beach – Presenting a fraudulent certificate of insurance.

Naser Abueqab, 38, 1105 SW 2nd St., Okeechobee – Failure to secure payment of workers' compensation insurance.

Robert L. Baker, 59, 1823 NW 14th St., Ocala – Workers' compensation fraud.

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