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Mansfield Man Charged with Running Car Scams

(MANSFIELD, Ohio)—Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine today announced that a Mansfield man has been charged with bilking customers out of about \$40,000 after offering to sell them cars, car parts, or auto repairs.

Jeffrey L. Smith, 25, was arraigned today in the Richland County Common Pleas Court. He was indicted by a Richland County grand jury in July on nine felony counts:

- Telecommunications fraud (3 counts)
- Theft of a motor vehicle (2 counts)
- Grand theft (1 count)
- Theft from an elderly person (1 count)
- Theft (1 count)
- Insurance fraud (1 count)

“We work hard to protect consumers from scams,” Attorney General DeWine said. “Our investigation uncovered a number of schemes and several people who paid the defendant for something they never received in return. We’ll continue to pursue this case, and we encourage any other affected consumers to contact the Ohio Attorney General’s Office.”

Smith allegedly used specialized auto websites to advertise that he had classic cars or car parts available for sale. He encouraged customers to pay via wire transfer (or similar

payment methods), but investigators determined that he never delivered the promised goods. He also allegedly offered car repairs through Smith Designs, an auto body shop in Mansfield, but kept vehicles illegally after accepting them for repairs. He also is accused of providing false statements when applying for insurance coverage.

The case was investigated by the Ohio Attorney General’s Economic Crimes Unit with assistance from the Richland County Sheriff’s Office and the National Insurance Crime Bureau.

An attorney from the Ohio Attorney General’s Economic Crimes Unit was appointed by the Richland County Prosecutor to serve as special prosecutor in the case.

