



Orange County News

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District Attorney Hoovler Announces Two Felony Guilty Pleas By Former Middletown Car Dealer

*Former owner of Hawk's Community Auto Sales Admits
Defrauding Customers and Tax Evasion*

Orange County District Attorney David M. Hoovler announced that on Tuesday, July 11, 2017, Ameen Hawkins, 37, of Middletown, pleaded guilty before Orange County Court Judge Craig Stephen Brown to felony charges of Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree and Criminal Tax Fraud in the Third Degree, in connection his operation of Hawk's Community Auto Sales, which operated a used car lot in the City of Middletown.

At the time Hawkins pleaded guilty, he admitted that between October 1, 2014 and December 31, 2015, he had engaged in a scheme to defraud his customers. Hawkins scheme resulted in his customers purchasing cars for which they could not obtain titles. Investigation revealed that Hawkins had failed to pay off prior liens on the vehicles, a fact which was concealed from his customers. Hawkins' customers have now been able to obtain titles to the vehicles and properly register them.

In addition to admitting that he defrauded his customers, Hawkins also admitted intentionally evading taxes due to the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance; including by failing to report on his personal income tax returns the money that he had derived from defrauding the customers of his used car lot. Hawkins is scheduled to be sentenced on September 21, 2017, in connection with his two felony guilty pleas.

District Attorney Hoovler thanked the City of Middletown Police Department for their investigation and the arrest in the case, as well as the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles and the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance for their assistance in the investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Kerry Kolek.

“Automobile purchases are among the most significant expenditures most people will ever make,” said District Attorney Hoovler. “Customers making those purchases have a right not to be cheated, and to receive proper legal title to what they purchased. I commend the City of Middletown Police Department for working with the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance, and the District Attorney’s Office to help unravel the frauds committed in this matter, and to ensure that customers ultimately received proper legal titles for the vehicles that they purchased with their hard earned money. This defendant not only defrauded his customers, but also defrauded the state, and it is fitting that he pleaded guilty to felony charges for both. My office will continue to prosecute those who engage in schemes to defraud the public.”

A criminal charge is merely an allegation by the police that a defendant has committed a violation of the criminal law, and it is not evidence of guilt. All defendants are presumed innocent and entitled to a fair trial, during which it will be the State of New York’s burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

