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**DURING NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION WEEK,  
AG MARSHALL ANNOUNCES TOP CONSUMER COMPLAINTS**

*March 5-11 is National Consumer Protection Week*

(MONTGOMERY) – During National Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Steven T. Marshall announced the top consumer complaints received in the office’s Consumer Interest Division during 2016. He also urged Alabamians to notify his office when they experience or suspect consumer fraud.

“Our best allies in fighting fraud and scams are the consumers themselves,” said Attorney General Marshall. “Unfortunately, the more successful we are in this battle, the more likely the perpetrators are to update and adapt their illegal activities. As we observe National Consumer Protection Week, I want to remind consumers that their awareness and vigilance are our best weapons against deceptive and unscrupulous practices. My office stands ready to provide education and assistance, and I am proud of the specialists who last year handled nearly 3,000 complaints and worked to prevent many scams from being successful. Our goal is to inform consumers, and working together, to make a better Alabama.”

The Attorney General’s Consumer Interest Division received 2,779 consumer complaints during 2016 with the top five as follows:

1. Automobiles
2. Utilities
3. Debt collection
4. Home repair
5. Retail purchases

Attorney General Marshall’s office maintains a consumer protection hotline to take reports of fraudulent activity and to provide information and tools to equip consumers to protect themselves.

The Attorney General's Consumer Interest Division **cannot serve as an individual's private attorney or provide consumers with legal advice.** However, in many instances, the Attorney General’s Office has been successful in mediating complaints to the mutual satisfaction and benefit of the consumer and the business.

If circumstances warrant, the Attorney General may initiate legal action, either civil or criminal, to represent the interests of the State of Alabama and to enforce the various laws designed to protect consumers from con artists and unscrupulous practices by businesses.

Alabamians may report suspected consumer fraud by calling Attorney General’s consumer protection hotline at **1-800-392-5658** or online at <http://www.ago.alabama.gov> and click on “Consumer Protection.” To file an online complaint, use the link: <http://www.ago.alabama.gov/Page-Consumer-Protection-File-a-Complaint-01>.

