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Inside This ISSUE

- 1 A Look at the Violations Raised by House Bill 17
- 2 Don't Let the Debt Collectors Shake You Down
Testimonial
- 3 Southwest Florida Pool Pros
Meet David Lampley
Easy Bacon and Spinach Stir-Fry
- 4 Best Typo Ever

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RIGHT OR WRONG

The Inhumane and Toxic Implications of House Bill 17

Yesterday, we helped save a single mom's home from foreclosure. She and her kids will have a place to sleep tonight. This morning, we were able to settle a case for a minor who was horribly injured in a car accident. This recovery will provide the family with the financial stability they desperately need. Most days are like this for me, and I love it. I love being a lawyer, practicing law, and helping people restore hope when they have lost it. But every once in a while, something comes across my desk that makes me say WTH were they thinking. For example, I recently read House Bill 17, which is pending in the Florida House of Representatives. Trust me, you didn't want to be within shouting distance when I was reading this bill. I was absolutely disgusted, and everyone around me knew it. If this bill becomes a law, clients who have been injured by the negligence of another party are only entitled to \$1 million for non-economic damages. In other words, the Florida Legislature wants to cap jury awards. I think they are overstepping their bounds just a bit and infringing on the jury.

Non-economic damages include but are not limited to pain and suffering, mental anguish, loss of capacity for the enjoyment of life, loss of consortium, etc. How can some bureaucrat in Tallahassee think this is a good thing for Floridians? As if that wasn't enough, the bill also mandates that the jury not be told of this limit. So now we must keep juries in the dark — not about how much they can award — but about

how much an injured plaintiff will actually receive. It's bad enough that we deceive juries in auto accident cases by not telling them about auto insurance in the first place. Now, we are going to further deceive the members of the jury and let them think their verdict mattered. It is deceptive and unfair.

I learned that a democracy is simple: rule by the people. I don't know of any decent Floridian who has driven on I-75 or I-4 in the last few months who could possibly be in favor of this bill. Basically, our elected officials are saying that no matter how badly you are injured, your pain and suffering will cap out at \$1 million. That is ridiculous. Our elected officials in Tallahassee must be smoking crack and not talking to their constituents — unless their constituents are the insurance companies. But wait a minute, that's not democracy ... is it?

When I was young and couldn't figure things out, my dad told me to follow the money. If you follow the money, you will be on the path to figuring out the real problem and who is behind it. Here, the money takes you on a path of greed. All Floridians lose on this issue. I cannot think of one Floridian who wins under this House bill. Oh, wait, I am mistaken. I can think of a few, and they are sitting in Tallahassee (probably having lunch right now with an insurance company lobbyist).

I am just a lawyer representing blue collar people in their struggle to get by after a

devastating and life altering auto accident. But no matter how small my little bubble may be, the scope of this travesty is so much greater than all of us. As an attorney, I want to achieve justice for my client no matter what the benefit to me may be, so I don't want to have to look the parents of a 7-year-old child in the eyes and tell them that their child's full damage claim is not going to be covered because some bureaucrats in Tallahassee sold them out by passing a bill that protects insurance companies.

As citizens of the great state of Florida, we have a duty to elect representatives who will speak the minds of the people and bring forth bills to protect the rights of private citizens. We have a duty to elect people to office who are not the kind of clowns who let this sort of thing happen as they get payouts from lobbyists. The argument for these caps is that the lawyers and juries are out of control. They are saying that lawyers are pushing for unnecessary and substantial amounts for their clients. Well, if protecting my clients makes me part of the problem, then that's a moniker I don't mind wearing on my sleeve. We here at the Dellutri Law Group will not allow corrupt thinking to become the norm, and we will always stand by our clients in their fight for proper compensation and recognition from those who changed their lives for the worse.

-Carmen Dellutri

If you know someone who would like a copy of this newsletter, please visit this link to add them to our mailing list:

DellutriLawGroup.com/newsletter.

THE BEST TYPO EVER: A TRUE STORY

FROM CARMEN DELLUTRI

Client,
I made the call, and it's in the process right now. I will let you know when I hear something. They said that once the checks are processed, they will send me a letter or email. Also, they will contact your HR dept. and cancel the garnishment quickly.

I hope this helps.

Sincerely;
Carmen Dellutri

FROM CLIENT

Carmen,
I'm hoping everything's okay.

FROM CARMEN DELLUTRI

Client,
The good news is that all payments were made in a timely fashion. So, we have complied with our settlement agreement. The bad news is that they will take a couple of days to process. So, hopefully, we will hear something tomorrow afternoon or Friday.

The other good news is that they did not call me today with any problems. The other bad news is that once this case is over, we won't be email buddies anymore, but I will add you to our newsletter, and you can keep up with the firm and me that way. I really think you will like it.

No other bad news. But I still need to get a better grasp on the types of patients and/or referral partners to refer to you, as I know they will be well taken care of.

Sincerely;
Carmen Dellutri

FROM CLIENT

Carmen,
So much good news and so much bad news! Of all the bad news, I will miss being email buddies most!

I can't thank you enough for all your help!!!!

FROM CARMEN DELLUTRI

Client,
BEST TYPO EVER "I can't thank you enough for all your help!!!!"

At least I think (hope) it was a typo.

Sincerely;
Carmen Dellutri

FROM CLIENT

Carmen,
O M G. Help! I totally meant HELP!!!

DON'T LET THE DEBT COLLECTORS SHAKE YOU DOWN

Know Your Rights

I've discussed fraudulent, abusive, and illegal debt collection tactics before, but this one takes the cake. Three men posing as lawyers coerced a multitude of people into paying "phantom debts" — debts that they did not actually owe. The men acted as "Alliance Law Group," and successfully collected hundreds of thousands of dollars from unsuspecting people.

The Federal Trade Commission ruled this week that the three will no longer be allowed to operate in the debt collection industry. In addition, the defendants have been ordered to surrender valuable assets. How does something like this happen? Unfortunately, it's a simple tactic that works if you are unaware of your rights.

THE SHAKEDOWN

Most people become very intimidated when contacted by a lawyer — so intimidated that they do not question a person's actual credentials. Knowing this, the criminals mentioned above threatened people with jail time, home visits, and other scare tactics in order to obtain thousands of dollars in false debt.

If you get a call like this, here's what you can (and should) do.

1. Ask for the person's full name and bar license number and the state they are licensed to practice law in. Each state has a directory of licensed attorneys or a phone number where you can verify their information.
2. Know whether or not you actually owe a debt. If you don't owe a debt, demand verification of the alleged debt.

3. Contact the company or person the debt is allegedly attached to, and inquire.
4. File a complaint with the Better Business Bureau and the Bar Association if you have no debt.
5. Do not, under any circumstances, give credit card information over the phone.

Lastly, contact a consumer protection attorney to see what can be done. In Florida, we have a state statute that protects individual consumer debtors from this type of harassment.

A legitimate debt collection law firm will send you a letter with detailed information about any kind of debt you may owe. Further, making sure you are on top of your debts will prevent an incident of this kind from ever happening to you.



TESTIMONIAL

HEAR FROM A HAPPY CLIENT ★★★★★

"Dellutri Law Firm is simply the best. The lawyers and staff all have a level of integrity and professionalism I have never experienced before. They will make you feel positive about an unfortunate time in your life. When my husband was laid off, we lost our home, we were buried in debt, and to add insult to injury, the first lawyer we went to made us feel like lowlifes. It was just awful. But after hearing Mr. Dellutri on a local radio channel, I gathered up the nerve to call in and

ask him a few questions, especially about the things the previous lawyer told us. He simply said, "Give me a chance. I know I can help." And he did. I can't say enough about this firm. They were there for us in the beginning and have been there ever since. They won't forget you. They will answer your calls and emails. I promise you — this firm is the best."

—Unknown

"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"
— John 8:12

HAVE YOU HEARD THE GOOD NEWS?



Small Business Spotlight:

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA POOL PROS

Chaz Hambling was born and raised in Fort Myers, with roots there dating all the way back to the early '50s. When Chaz entered the pool business in 2000, he knew he was meant to share his knowledge and work ethic with the local community. In 2002, Chaz opened Southwest Florida Pool Pros, a company that specializes in pool management, from changing filters to complete pool renovations.

With clients all over the state, Southwest Florida Pool Pros is dedicated to customer service. They offer free over-the-phone tech service during the day, evenings, weekends, and even on holidays to ensure your pool is operating properly. The best part is that they are not committed to any particular manufacturing company or rebate club. They use the same products for every pool and are dedicated to giving their clients user-friendly systems that are easy to operate.

Here is just a glimpse of some of the things they offer.

- Pool cleaning
- Pool equipment
- Filter changes
- Salt systems
- Complete renovations (range anywhere from 4–7 days)
- Tile change
- LED lights
- And many more services

Southwest Florida Pool Pros is the only pool servicing company south of Tampa that can convert dated fiberglass pools into concrete. In most cases, this could add anywhere from \$15,000–\$20,000 in equity to any home. Providing unique services like these truly makes them stand out from their competition!

Need a question answered, or simply looking for a trusted company to maintain the quality of your pool? They are always

there to pick up the phone! Feel free to give them a call at 239-872-8186 or visit their website at SWFLPoolpros.com for more information.



ATTORNEY SPOTLIGHT: DAVID LAMPLEY



Many of our clients who come in for complimentary consultations have the pleasure of meeting with David Lampley. We often hear from people that he gives great advice and really cares about their situations. People especially seem to appreciate when he tells them there is nothing he can do to help, but he knows someone who can. His advice may not always be what people want to hear, but it's what they need to hear.

When David isn't at the office meeting with clients, he is working hard at being the best dad he can be. David and his wife spend most of their weekends attending their boys' sporting events and catering to all of the fun responsibilities that come with being parents!

"No matter what accomplishments I have to be proud of in my life, having kids was by far the most rewarding and scariest thing I have ever done," he said. "Looking at my boys, I realize being a parent is the most amazing thing in the world. I wouldn't change a thing. I know our clients feel the same way about their children. I wish other attorneys would remember that people who come to them looking for advice are parents too, just trying to do what is best for their families. Every decision you make as a parent is with your family's best interest in mind."

MARU EASY BACON AND SPINACH STIR-FRY



Inspired by OhSnapLetsEat.com

Ingredients

- 3 slices bacon
- 3 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped
- 2 bunches spinach
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Directions

1. Heat a large skillet to medium.
2. While skillet is warming, cut bacon into squares.
3. Cook bacon until fat is rendered and bacon is almost to your desired doneness. If desired, you can remove bacon fat from skillet and replace with 1 tablespoon oil. However, keeping the fat is recommended for flavor.
4. Add garlic and cook for 1–2 minutes.
5. Add spinach and crushed red pepper and stir-fry for 10 minutes.
6. Season with salt and pepper, and serve.