

# *The Texas Committee on Insurance Fraud*

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## **Anti-Fraud Legislation headed to Governor**

Texas lawmakers took a huge step in curtailing the activities of today's ambulance chasers by passing HB 148. The bill now on its way to Governor Perry for his signature makes it illegal for lawyers, chiropractors and other health professionals to solicit the victims of auto accidents or catastrophes by telephone or in person.

The bill was aimed at telemarketers who contact crash victims by purchasing accident reports from local police departments. The crash victims are often told they need to visit a certain chiropractor whether they have been injured or not. While awaiting treatment, the crash victims are solicited by lawyers or people representing law firms who promise free legal advice.

"It's all a scam for a very small number of chiropractors, lawyers and others who are out to get as much as they can from an individual's insurance claim," says Dennis Devlin, chairman of the Texas Committee on Insurance Fraud. "We owe the bill's sponsors, Rep. Todd Smith and Sen. Jeff Wentworth, huge praise for passage of this legislation that will curtail this ongoing trail of lies, deception and outright theft."

Devlin said passage of this legislation was unique in that the insurance industry, the Texas Chiropractor Association and the Texas Trial Lawyers Association all worked together to ensure the bill's passage.

If convicted, the solicitors would face a Class A misdemeanor for the first offense, but the penalty would increase for any additional convictions. Upon the Governor's signature, the bill will take affect September 1, 2009.

The Texas Committee on Insurance Fraud is a group of concerns representatives of the insurance industry, state and county government, as well as Texas and national anti-fraud organizations who share a common goal in fighting insurance fraud.

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