

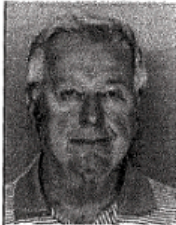
## Pa. insurance agency CEO accused of stealing \$1.3 million

Theft in premiums paid by organizations allegedly paid for man's lifestyle, business

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE of a bankrupt Scranton, Pa., insurance agency was charged with stealing more than \$1.3 million premium payments for his personal use.

Brian James Murray, 67, is the chairman, CEO and principal of Murray Insurance Agency on Spruce Street. He filed for personal bankruptcy and his company filed for corporate bankruptcy Sept. 22, 2009, according to the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office.

Murray is accused of illegally diverting \$1,302,672 in premiums that should have been forwarded to insurance companies as payment for policies issued to numerous organizations, including Mt. Airy Casino, the University of Scranton, St. Joseph's Uni-



Brian James Murray

## Pa. House targets 'unscrupulous, dishonest' adjusters

If approved, law would allow licensing of non-residents, businesses for first time

THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE passed a bill its sponsor, state Rep. Dom Costa, says would protect people from "unscrupulous, dishonest" insurance adjusters by mandating criminal background checks and approved training courses.

House Bill 2370 still requires the approval of the Pennsylvania Senate and Gov. Edward G. Rendell.

Costa (D-Allegheny) said Pennsylvania's public adjuster regulations have not been updated in the last 25 years.



Dom Costa

"This is a consumer protection bill because it would ensure insurance adjusters are who they say they are and are properly trained," Costa said.

Public adjusters are licensed and regulated by the Pennsylvania Insurance Department's staff.

In addition to setting a two-year licensing cycle and a \$200 nonrefundable application fee, the bill would force public adjusters to disclose in contracts that the policyholder has the right to rescind the

contract within 15 calendar days after signature, and disclose how the fees come from a portion of the claims payment.

Public adjusters could not have an interest in or receiving any profit from any salvage or restoration company, or similar business.

Additionally,

the bill would permit the licensing of non-residents and business entities for the first time, provided their home state has a reciprocal licensing agreement with Pennsylvania. ■

### // Adjusting the adjusters

The Pennsylvania House bill regarding public adjusters would require applicants to:

- Submit fingerprints for a national criminal background search
- Pay a nonrefundable \$200 licensing application fee
- Renew their licenses every two years
- Complete 24 hours of continuing education

Source: Pa. House Bill 2370