ORDER NO. E26- 97

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF BANKING AND INSURANCE

IN THE MATTER OF:

Proceedings by the Commissioner of Banking and Insurance, State of New Jersey, to fine the insurance license of, Stephen J. Caruso Reference No. 1038006	))))	CONSENT ORDER

To: Stephen J. Caruso
8389 Beagle Ter.
Vero Beach, FL 32967-5443

This matter, having been opened by the Commissioner of Banking and Insurance ("Commissioner"), State of New Jersey, upon information that Stephen J. Caruso ("Respondent"), currently licensed as a non-resident insurance producer, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 17:22A-34a, may have violated various provisions of the insurance laws of the State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the Respondent is subject to the provisions of the New Jersey Insurance Producer Licensing Act of 2001, N.J.S.A. 17:22A-26 to -48 ("Producer Act"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 17:22A-40(a), the Commissioner may place on probation, suspend, revoke or refuse to renew an insurance producer's license, and may levy a civil penalty for violation of the producer Act; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 17:22A-40(a)(2), an insurance producer shall not violate any insurance law, regulation, subpoena or order of the commissioner or of another state's insurance regulator; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 17:22A-40(a)(5), an insurance producer shall not intentionally misrepresent the terms of an actual or proposed insurance contract, policy or application for insurance; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 17:22A-40(a)(7), an insurance producer admitted or been found to have committed any insurance unfair trade practice; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 17:22A-40(a)(8), an insurance producer shall not use fraudulent, coercive or dishonest practices, or demonstrate incompetence, untrustworthiness or financial irresponsibility in the conduct of insurance business in this State or elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 17:22A-40(a)(10), an insurance producer shall not forge another's name to an application for insurance or to any document related to an insurance transaction; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 17:22A-40a(16), an insurance producer shall not commit any fraudulent act; and

WHEREAS, from 4/18/2019 to 10/23/2020, Respondent submitted a total of 28 annuity applications for NJ insureds to Fidelity & Guaranty Life Insurance Company; and

WHEREAS, each of the 28 applications contained a "Non- Resident Exception Form," that indicated, "the Applicant/Owner had a resident address in the State of Maine where the product was being solicited and the application was taken and signed. The policies were delivered in the State of Maine where the sales occurred, and the application was signed"; and

WHEREAS, this was all false since the 28 applicants had no residence address in the State of Maine nor did they travel to Maine to complete their application, in violation of N.J.S.A. 17:22A-40a (2), (5), (7), (8), (10) and (16); and

IT FURTHER APPEARING, that the Respondent:

1) Has admitted responsibility for the aforementioned violations;

2) Has cooperated with the investigation conducted by the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance ("Department"); and

WHEREAS, cause does exist under N.J.S.A. 17:22A-40a and N.J.S.A. 17:22A-45c for the imposition of a civil penalty for the aforementioned violations of the insurance laws of this State; and

WHEREAS, Respondent has waived his right to a hearing on the aforementioned violation and consent to the imposition of a civil penalty in the amount of thirty-five thousand dollars ($35,000.00); and

WHEREAS, this matter should be resolved upon the consent of the Parties without resort to a formal hearing;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS on this 4 day of September , 2026

ORDERED AND AGREED, that the Respondent shall pay a civil penalty totaling $35,000.00; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED AND AGREED, that said fine shall be paid by certified check, cashier's check or money order made payable to the "State of New Jersey, General Treasury," due immediately upon the execution of this Consent Order by Respondent; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED AND AGREED, that the signed Consent Order, together with the fine payment of $ 35,000.00 shall be remitted to:

New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance
Attention: Thomas Stanley - Manager, Enforcement Unit
9th Floor, Consumer Protection Services, Enforcement
P.O. Box 329
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0329

and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED AND AGREED, that the civil penalties in this Consent Order are imposed pursuant to the police powers of the State of New Jersey for the enforcement of the law and the protection of the public health, safety and welfare, and is not intended to constitute debts which may be limited or discharged in a bankruptcy proceeding; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED and AGREED that the provisions of this Consent Order represent a final agency decision and constitutes a final resolution of the violations contained herein.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED AND AGREED, that the Respondent shall cease and desist from engaging in the conduct that gave rise to this Consent Order.

Mark J. Gyorfy

Mark Gyorfy
Acting Commissioner

Consented to as to Form,
Entry and Content

By: _____
Stephen J. Caruso

Date: 08/21/2026