

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF CLINTON COUNTY, OHIO

STATE OF OHIO, ex rel.)
MICHAEL DEWINE)
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF OHIO)
30 East Broad St., 14th Floor)
Columbus, Ohio 43215)

Plaintiff,)

v.)

MC AUTO)
c/o Michael Crowe)
Statutory Agent)
11 E. Washington St.)
Sabina, OH 45169)

and)

MICHAEL CROWE, Individually,)
9236 St. Rt. 28)
New Vienna, OH 45159)

CASE NO.

CVH 20150098

JUDGE

2015 MAR 18 AM 10:17

CLINTON COUNTY
CYNTHIA R. BARLEY, CLERK

COMPLAINT FOR
DECLARATORY JUDGMENT,
INJUNCTIVE RELIEF,
RESTITUTION, CIVIL
PENALTIES, AND OTHER
APPROPRIATE RELIEF

JURISDICTION

1. Plaintiff, State of Ohio, by and through Counsel, the Attorney General of Ohio, Michael DeWine, having reasonable cause to believe that violations of Ohio's consumer protection laws have occurred, brings this action in the public interest and on behalf of the State of Ohio under the authority vested in him by the Ohio Consumer Sales Practices Act, R.C. 1345.01 *et seq.*, and the Certificate of Motor Vehicle Title Act, R.C. 4505.01 *et seq.*
2. The actions of Defendants, hereinafter described, have occurred in the State of Ohio, Clinton County and, as set forth below, are in violation of the Consumer Sales Practices Act, R.C. 1345.01 *et seq.*, and the Certificate of Motor Vehicle Title Act, R.C. 4505.01 *et seq.*

3. Defendants, as described below, are “supplier[s]” as that term is defined in R.C. 1345.01(C) as Defendants were, at all times relevant herein, engaged in the business of effecting or soliciting “consumer transactions” as that term is defined in R.C. 1345.01(A).
4. Defendants, as described below, engaged in “consumer transactions” by offering for sale, selling or financing the purchase of used motor vehicles to individuals for purposes that were primarily personal, family or household within the meaning specified in R.C. 1345.01(A) and (D).
5. The actions of Defendants, hereinafter described, have occurred in the State of Ohio and Clinton County.
6. Jurisdiction over the subject matter of this action lies with this Court pursuant to R.C. 1345.04 of the Consumer Sales Practices Act.
7. This Court has venue to hear this case pursuant to Ohio Civ. R. 3(B)(1)-(3), in that Defendants reside in, operated their business from, and engaged in the transactions complained of herein in Clinton County.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

8. Defendant MC Auto is an Ohio limited liability company last operating at 11 E. Washington St., Sabina, OH 45169.
9. On information and belief, Defendant Michael Crowe (hereinafter “Crowe”) is an individual whose address is 9236 St. Rte. 28, New Vienna, OH 45159.
10. Defendant Crowe was the owner of and operated Defendant MC Auto and dominated, controlled and directed the business activities and sales conduct of MC Auto, and exercised the authority to establish, implement or alter the policies of MC Auto, and

committed, allowed, directed, ratified or otherwise caused the following unlawful acts to occur.

11. Defendants were at all times relevant to this action engaged in the business of soliciting, promoting, purchasing, selling, financing and collecting the proceeds of the sales of used motor vehicles from their location in Sabina to consumers residing in Clinton and other Ohio counties.
12. Defendants, operating under the name MC Auto, solicited individual consumers to enter into consumer transactions, specifically for the sale of used motor vehicles.
13. At all relevant times hereto, Defendant MC Auto held license #UD018957 issued by the State of Ohio under R.C. 4517.01 *et seq.*, allowing it to engage in the business of displaying or selling at retail or wholesale used motor vehicles.
14. At all relevant times hereto, the Defendants were displaying or selling used motor vehicles at the MC Auto location.
15. The Defendants failed to file applications for certificates of title within Thirty (30) days after the assignment or delivery of motor vehicles.
16. The Defendants failed to obtain certificates of title on or before the Fortieth (40th) day after the sale of motor vehicles.
17. Title Defect Rescission consumer claims totaling \$13,988.19 thus far were paid from the Title Defect Rescission Fund, administered by the Ohio Attorney General's Office, after the Defendants failed to obtain certificates of title on or before the Fortieth (40th) day after the sale of motor vehicles.

CAUSE OF ACTION
VIOLATIONS OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MOTOR VEHICLE TITLE ACT

18. Plaintiff incorporates by reference, as if completely rewritten herein, the allegations set forth in paragraphs One through Seventeen (1-17) of this Complaint.
19. The Defendants engaged in unfair and deceptive acts and practices in violation of R.C. 1345.02 by failing to file applications for certificates of title within Thirty (30) days after the assignment of delivery of motor vehicles as required by R.C. 4505.06(A)(5)(b).
20. The Defendants committed unfair and deceptive acts or practices in violation of the Consumer Sales Practices Act, R.C. 1345.02(A), by selling motor vehicles to consumers, in the ordinary course of business, and then failing to obtain certificates of title on or before the Fortieth (40th) day of sale of the motor vehicles as required by R.C. 4505.181(B)(1).
21. Such acts or practices have been previously determined by Ohio courts to violate the Consumer Sales Practices Act, R.C. 1345.01 et seq. The Defendants committed said violations after such decisions were available for public inspection pursuant to R.C. 1345.05(A)(3).

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully prays that this Court:

- A. **ISSUE A DECLARATORY JUDGMENT** declaring that each act or practice described in Plaintiff's Complaint violates the Consumer Sales Practices Act, R.C. 1345.01 et seq., and the Certificate of Motor Vehicle Title Act, R.C. 4505.01 et seq. in the manner set forth in this Complaint.

- B. ISSUE PERMANENT INJUNCTIVE RELIEF enjoining Defendants and their officers, agents, servants, representatives, salespeople, employees, successors and assigns and all persons acting in concert or participating with them, directly or indirectly, from engaging in the acts or practices of which Plaintiff complains and from further violating the Consumer Sales Practices Act, R.C. 1345.01 *et seq.*, and the Certificate of Motor Vehicle Title Act, R.C. 4505.01 *et seq.*
- C. ORDER Defendants jointly and severally liable for reimbursement to all consumers found to have been damaged by the Defendants' unfair and deceptive, acts and practices, and motor vehicle title violations.
- D. ORDER Defendants jointly and severally liable for reimbursement to the Title Defect Recision Fund ("TDR") for funds expended to resolve title defects caused by Defendants motor vehicle title violations.
- E. ASSESS, FINE, AND IMPOSE upon Defendants, jointly and severally, a civil penalty of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) for each of the appropriate unfair or deceptive acts alleged in the Complaint, pursuant to R.C. 1345.07(D).
- F. ASSESS, FINE, AND IMPOSE upon Defendants, jointly and severally, an additional civil penalty of not more than Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00) for each violation of the Certificate of Motor Vehicle Title Act, pursuant to R.C. 4505.99.
- G. ORDER, as a means of insuring compliance with this Court's Order and with the consumer protection laws of Ohio, Defendants to maintain in their possession and control for a period of Five (5) years all **business records relating to the Defendants' solicitation and sale of used motor vehicles in Ohio and to permit the Ohio Attorney General or his**

representative, upon reasonable twenty-four (24) hour notice, to inspect and/or copy any and all records.

- H. Order that the Defendants be enjoined from engaging as a supplier in consumer transactions until they have satisfied all restitution, civil penalties, and any other costs ordered.
- I. ORDER the Defendants to pay all court costs.
- J. GRANT such other relief as the Court deems to be just, equitable and appropriate.
- K. ORDER that Defendant Crowe be prohibited from applying for an auto dealer or salesperson license under Chapter 4517 of the Revised Code.

Respectfully submitted,

MICHAEL DEWINE
Attorney General

/s/ Rosemary E. Rupert
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