

New York State Senate

Standing Committee on Housing, Construction and Community Development

Public Hearing

DEED THEFT, 250 Broadway, New York, NY 10007, on October 27, 2022, at 10:00 am.

Testimony of

Jillian Sumpter, victim of deed theft.

Mr/Madam Chair and members of the committee, I am Jillian Sumpter from Brooklyn, New York. I am here on behalf of my Mother Dianne Sumpter and myself.

I thank you for the opportunity to give my testimony on the hearing for Deed Theft.

As an actual victim of Deed Thief, I can give you firsthand what it means for homeowners to be victims of the deed thief and the overwhelming feeling of loss, despair/fear/shame and loneliness/embarrassment.

My father/mother purchased our home in Bedford Stuyvesant, Brooklyn with a desire to build generational wealth for our family, which was growing by their adoption of my two younger brothers. My father passed away approx. 5 years after and during this, my mother was at an emotionally and financially vulnerable state in her life.

My mother was approached by these thieves with a promise to "fix her credit" "lower her monthly payment" and so forth. At this juncture in her life, she is a widowed mother on a fixed income. This particular gang of thieves were actually in the news for doing this to not only my mother's property but to other properties throughout Brooklyn and Queens. According to charges, the scammers concealed the true nature of the transactions from their clients and distributed fraudulently obtained loan proceeds to themselves, other defendants and entities. They were also charged with fraudulently preparing documents.

The Queens District Attorney, Richard Brown, brought charges to seventeen individuals in 2010. I personally assisted on the case working closely with the investigators.

But, the with this fight ending another was just boiling under the surface with Fidelity national law group

The FDIC issued a cease and desist order against Fremont in March 2007 alleging that Fremont was operating without effective risk management policies and without adequate loan underwriting criteria. The Massachusetts Attorney General filed a lawsuit against Fremont in October 2007. In 2008, Massachusetts managed to get an injunction against Fremont Investment and loan from foreclosing on properties. The Center for Public Integrity listed Fremont as one of the top 10 companies most responsible for the U.S. financial meltdown.

The issue is where this does leaves the victims and the properties they defrauded. Returning deeds to the owners does not stop banks and title insurance companies from pursuing the victims or putting astronomical loans on the properties.

I say this from my personal experience on an ongoing case in Brooklyn Supreme Court with Fidelity National Law Group representing a now defunct bank Fremont Investment and Loan Mortgage Company, which was known as the biggest subprime mortgage lenders and allowed processed the actual fraudulent loan the scammer took on my mother property

My family and I having been fighting for over ten years to stop this foreclosure on my mother's property, I have reached out to numerous city and state agencies regarding the issue. I have approached countless organizations and law enforcement agencies, but no one had been willing or capable to take up the complex case.

This is what happens to people who are actual victims and the property. I have read numerous cases in housing court where even though the homeowner is a victim, they still lose the property by foreclosure or liens by the courts

This is the scariest part, we the victims are left to clean up this mess alone.

How is it the remotely possible to be a victim again but this time by our local government? We have no protection, no defense against the judges who rule in favor of banks and title companies. I cannot afford an attorney to fight the big companies that have a team of lawyers literally deciated to make Deed Victims, victims again. Thank you for listening.