



*United States Attorney
District of New Jersey*

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**FORMER PRESIDENT AND OWNER OF NEW JERSEY CHIROPRACTIC CLINIC
SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR STAGING AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS FOR PROFIT**

NEWARK, N.J. – The former president and owner of Spinal Care & Rehabilitation Center (“Spinal Care”), a chiropractic clinic in Rahway, N.J., was sentenced today to 37 months in prison in connection with his scheme to stage automobile accidents in order to send the participants to his clinic for phony treatment, United States Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Roberto Castanon, 63, previously pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail fraud before U.S. District Judge William H. Walls, who also imposed the sentence today in Newark federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

Castanon admitted that from January 2003 through February 2007, he conspired with others to stage automobile accidents. As part of the conspiracy, Castanon and others recruited individuals to participate in the staged accidents, instructing them to have intentional collisions. Castanon admitted that the scheme resulted in more than \$400,000 in losses to insurance companies.

After a staged accident, a participant or another coconspirator would call law enforcement to the scene where the participant would misrepresent the extent of his or her injuries, which were documented in police reports later submitted to insurance companies.

Castanon directed the participants to come to his clinic, misrepresent to the treating chiropractor the extent of their injuries, and get “treatment.” Castanon would bill insurance companies for the treatment, and the participants would be paid cash by Castanon or his coconspirators. Castanon also sent invoices and medical documents by mail to several insurance companies for chiropractic services to individuals who were involved in the staged accidents.

The majority of the patients of Spinal Care were receiving treatment under “no-fault” automobile insurance plans. Under New Jersey law, any individual who has a motor vehicle registered in New Jersey must obtain valid vehicle insurance coverage to drive that vehicle. This insurance coverage includes compulsory personal injury protection, meaning that if a claimant sustains an injury as a result of a motor vehicle collision, that individual’s insurance carrier is required to pay necessary and reasonable medical expenses arising from such injury, regardless of fault or liability.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Walls ordered Castanon to serve three years of supervised release and pay \$341,688.94 in restitution.

Castanon, the ringleader of the scheme, is the third to be sentenced in connection with the fraud. Two individuals who were recruited by Castanon to participate in staging the accidents and assist in submitting false claims also pleaded guilty to mail fraud conspiracy. Ramon Breton Cabrera was sentenced April 6, 2010, to 26 months in prison, three years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay \$197,738.43 in restitution. Heriberto Santiago-Jimenez was sentenced June 21, 2010, to 18 months in prison, three years of supervised release, and was ordered to pay \$71,979.98 in restitution.

U.S. Attorney Fishman praised postal inspectors with the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Inspector in Charge David Collins, for their investigation leading to today's sentence.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jacob Elberg of the U.S. Attorney's Office Securities and Healthcare Fraud Unit.

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Defense counsel: Paul Condon, Esq., Newark