

Wyoming Secretary of State

Chuck Gray



June 21, 2024

Via E-mail and U.S. Mail

Re: Reporting Business Fraud to the Wyoming Secretary of State

Dear County Assessors,

Our office is dedicated to serving the people of Wyoming and maintaining the integrity of business operations and records. As such, our administration has taken proactive steps to address the growing concern of business fraud and abuse of corporate filings. During the Wyoming Legislature's Joint Corporations, Elections, & Political Subdivisions Interim Committee Meeting on April 22, 2024, our office was presented with information and concerns by state and county officials that could have been addressed by our office under existing statute had it been brought to our attention. State and county authorities have an affirmative duty to timely inform our office of situations where a business has fraudulently listed an address they have no legal right to use. I am reaching out to all county assessors so that we may work together to stop and deter fraud in our state in a timely manner.

Historically, when a business filing has been found to misuse an address—claiming a legal premise where it has no right to operate—the Secretary of State's Office's standard procedure involved simply removing that address from our records **without** necessarily dissolving the entity. However, when I took office in January 2023, I had our team immediately begin a comprehensive review of our statutory authority to take administrative action in certain instances of fraud. In 2023, our office began utilizing statute to implement a procedure allowing the rightful owner or legal resident of an impacted address to submit a sworn affidavit attesting that the subject business entity does not have a legal right to operate at their address. If, upon receipt and verification of a complaint and accompanying affidavit, our office determines that a business entity should be administratively dissolved pursuant to Wyoming law, our office will begin the administrative dissolution process. Partnering with other state agencies, and members of the public, our office has utilized this process to stop and deter fraud in many instances. Further details on this procedure and its positive impact were discussed in detail at the April 22 Joint Corporations meeting.

Please note that these affidavits are considered public records once filed with our office and must remain accessible. Upon request, our office is happy to provide examples of affidavits used in the past. These documents should serve as a reference for any parties needing to file such an affidavit.

I encourage you to disseminate this information widely, especially to individuals who have experienced unauthorized business filings at their addresses. **It is pivotal that you bring evidence of fraud to our attention immediately and without delay.**

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your cooperation. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chuck Gray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail on the "y".

Chuck Gray
Wyoming Secretary of State