



**Testimony to the Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee in  
Support of the Consumer Fraud Restitution Fund (SF 447)**

**March 11, 2025**

**Submitted by Helene Johnson**

Chair Klein and Committee Members,

My name is Helene Johnson, and I live in Golden Valley. Today, I'm writing to share my personal and distressing experience as a fraud victim of the Dr. Kamel and Woodbury Dental Arts scandal. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell my story and highlight the need for financial restitution for fraud victims.

After breaking my teeth in 2023, I embarked on a lengthy search for a reputable dentist with special training to perform implants. I finally chose Dr. Kamel and Woodbury Dental Arts (WDA) because of their willingness to customize and only do implants on top (which was all I needed and a major cost saving!). I had seen their ad on television which would signal a good reputation. During my initial consultations, I was told implants are not covered by insurance and I needed to pay upfront.

After six months, during which time I got the money needed via loans from family members and a friend, I moved forward with the surgery in January 2024. During those six months, Dr. Kamel's dental license was suspended, and he informed no one. When I scheduled a follow-up appointment for April, I was devastated to learn that WDA had closed its doors in March with no notice. His license had been revoked and he was going to declare bankruptcy. I found out through the news, leaving me and countless others in a state of shock and uncertainty, burdened with thousands of dollars that had been defrauded. Over 300 patients joined an online support group!

This painful experience cost me \$15,000, which I am still struggling to repay. I initially tried to obtain restitution directly from the dentist who defrauded me, but he no longer had any assets to collect. My next step was to seek restitution through the state Attorney General's office, but, unfortunately, they did not have any options available for compensating victims.

This experience has caused immense stress and embarrassment for me. It has significantly impacted my life which involves much social interaction in meetings, on Zoom, etc. Luckily, I was able to find a very understanding dentist who has provided my services at cost and I am finally able to expand my menu beyond soup, mashed potatoes, etc. The emotional toll has been overwhelming, and the financial burden continues to weigh heavily on me.

I urge you to establish a Consumer Fraud Restitution Fund to support fraud victims. Such a fund would provide much-needed relief and support to those who have suffered from these deceitful practices. Thank you for your time and consideration.