

District Attorney Marc Bennett  
18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District of Kansas



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For Immediate Release, May 15, 2024

**WICHITA, KAN.** – A \$23,197.00 default judgment was entered against a Wichita pawnbroker for engaging in deceptive and unconscionable acts under the Kansas Consumer Protection Act (KCPA). The matter was investigated by the Office of the District Attorney’s Consumer Protection Division after receiving a consumer complaint against Ethan Ma, doing business as 1<sup>st</sup> Gold, 2408 S. Hillside.

The Consumer Protection Division alleged Ethan Ma violated the Kansas Consumer Protection Act (KCPA) by acting as an unlicensed pawnbroker and failing to return a consumer’s property offered as surety on a loan. The Court found these alleged violations to be deceptive and unconscionable under the KCPA. As part of the ruling, the Court ordered Ethan Ma to pay \$2,000.00 in restitution to the consumer, \$20,000.00 in civil penalties, as well as court costs and investigation fees. The court also ordered Ethan Ma to refrain from engaging in consumer transactions in Kansas until he is properly licensed and all restitution, costs and fees are paid.

The District Attorney reminds consumers to exercise care when pawning items of value, especially those with sentimental value, because they may be difficult or impossible to recover. The City of Wichita requires all pawnbrokers to be licensed, and every loan must be evidenced by a written contract, a copy of which must be provided to the borrower. The City of Wichita also requires all pawnbrokers to post their license in a conspicuous place at or near the entrance to the licensed pawnshop.

The default judgment was ordered on April 30, 2024 by Judge Stephen Ternes. The case was investigated by Kristen Zluticky of the District Attorney’s Office.

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