

# California Man Sentenced for Swindling Elderly

By: David Pastor

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In April, Timothy Barnett of Orange County was sentenced to “25 years to life” in prison for swindling elderly people out of their homes. The man targeted older residents of South Los Angeles who had borrowed against their homes when their houses had value and were facing foreclosure due to their failure to make payments on the debt. He went into their homes and prayed with them and told them he would save their homes. He manipulated people into granting him title of their homes and he proceeded to take all the equity from them.

Five of his victims ended up homeless and his last victim was an 85 year old blind widow. The judge commented during the sentencing hearing that “Even Bernie Madoff didn’t take people’s homes from them.”

It is frightening to imagine people like Timothy Barnett are in our communities taking advantage of our most vulnerable population. The best way to protect people in our community is to communicate with our family and neighbors and have a good understanding of their financial circumstances as well as who they are authorizing to come into their homes or help them manage their assets. Keeping a watchful eye is the first step in protecting people.

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About Walnut Creek Estate Planning

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