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**NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**October 26, 2023**

**Department of Finance, CFTC, and 29 State Regulators Reach Settlement with Safeguard Metals in \$68 Million Fraud Targeting Elderly Adults**

**BOISE, IDAHO** – The Idaho Department of Finance (IDOF) announced today that, in partnership with the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and 29 other state regulators, the parties have reached a settlement with precious metals dealer Safeguard Metals, LLC and Jeffrey Ikahn in a [federal lawsuit](#) filed in February 2022, in the United States District Court for the Central District of California. The lawsuit alleged that Safeguard and Ikahn engaged in a \$68 million fraudulent scheme that targeted the elderly.

A key finding in the Consent Order is that between October 2017 and July 2021, Safeguard and Ikahn deceived more than 450 customers nationwide into purchasing precious metals through false and misleading statements, including misrepresenting Safeguard’s and Ikahn’s credentials and the risk and safety of customer investments in traditional retirement accounts.

“Safeguard Metals engaged in fraudulent and deceptive practices to solicit millions of dollars primarily from elderly and retirement-aged individuals for profit. As a result, customers suffered substantial losses on their retirement investments,” said IDOF Director Patricia Perkins. “By joining this settlement, in partnership with the CFTC and other state regulators, IDOF continues its efforts to protect consumers by holding bad actors in the precious metals industry accountable for their actions.”

The Consent Order also finds that the defendants charged an average markup of 51 to 71 percent on the precious metals, which was substantially more than the amounts the defendants represented in Safeguard Metals’ customer agreements as “operating margins” of 23 to 42 percent. Safeguard Metals steered over 97 percent of its sales from mostly inexperienced investors into overpriced silver coins which had significantly higher markups than gold coins and generated approximately \$66 million for Safeguard.

The defendants agree to the use of the Consent Order’s findings and conclusions in this action and any subsequent actions between the parties, but otherwise, neither admit nor deny the findings.

As part of the court approved settlement, Safeguard and Ikahn agreed to a permanent injunction that enjoins them from violating several federal and state laws including laws that prohibit commodities fraud, securities and investment adviser fraud, and providing unlicensed investment advice.

In addition, Ikahn agreed to an order barring him from any position of employment, management, or control of any investment adviser, broker-dealer, or commodity adviser in Idaho. Further he agreed to orders barring him from the securities industry in other states, and to a federal commodity trading ban. In the next phase of the litigation, the appropriate amount of customer restitution and civil monetary penalties will be determined.

Safeguard and Ikahn also agreed to settle a federal lawsuit filed by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) alleging violations of federal securities laws. The IDOF wishes to thank the CFTC, other state

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regulators, and the SEC for their assistance in this action.

The IDOF cautions investors to thoroughly research any investment opportunity. Call the IDOF at 1-800-334-8000 and ask for the Securities Bureau to check out persons offering investment opportunities, investment advice for a fee and any products they offer. Contact the IDOF to report suspected fraud, inappropriate securities business practices, or to obtain consumer information.

The Department of Finance can be reached by telephone at (208) 332-8000 or electronic mail at [securities@finance.idaho.gov](mailto:securities@finance.idaho.gov).

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*Department of Finance press releases, and other information can be found on the Internet at <http://finance.idaho.gov> or may be obtained by contacting the Department at (208)-332-8000 or Idaho toll-free at 1-888-346-3378.*