

# National Tax Lien Association Issues Strong Investor Warning: Over-the-Counter Tax Liens Pose Serious Financial Risk

*NTLA warns investors: Over-the-counter tax liens are high-risk, often tied to worthless properties, and promoted by misleading, unlicensed educators.*

JUPITER, FL, UNITED STATES, June 13, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Tax Lien Association (NTLA), the nation's recognized authority on tax lien and tax deed investing, has issued a nationwide warning to current and prospective investors: purchasing over-the-counter (OTC) tax lien certificates pose a significant financial risk, and in many cases, leads to a complete loss of investment.



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*Brad Westover, Executive  
Director of NTLA*

In public auctions conducted by counties across the United States, investors compete to purchase liens on properties with unpaid taxes. These auctions attract experienced professionals who rely on data, research tools, and thorough due diligence. When a lien is not purchased during the primary sale, it is typically because seasoned investors identified a problem and deliberately avoided it.

“When experienced investors pass on a lien, it’s not because they were overlooked—it’s because they saw a problem,” said Brad Westover, Executive Director of the

NTLA.

OTC Liens Often Indicate Severely Distressed or Worthless Property

The NTLA cautions that the vast majority of OTC tax liens—those unsold at the initial

auction—are tied to distressed properties with little to no market value. These often include: Swampland, landlocked parcels with no legal access, unusable easements or right-of-way, Contaminated industrial sites such as former gas stations with underground tanks, Burned-down, or otherwise uninhabitable structures. In many cases, the tax burden on the property exceeds its market value.



"As an attorney, I've seen firsthand the legal and financial fallout from investors being misled into purchasing over-the-counter tax liens without understanding the risks. A lot of these properties can't be sold, can't be built on, and end up being more of a burden than an investment," said Bruce Bronster, Founding Partner of Bronster LLP.

In fact, more than 95% of OTC tax liens ultimately fail to redeem, meaning the investor is left with no return and no viable property. The result is a complete loss of capital.

#### Fraudulent Educators Promoting "Fool's Gold"

Adding to the concern is the role of aggressive, often unlicensed promoters who market OTC liens as hidden treasures. The NTLA warns that many of these individuals operate through flashy hotel seminars, pitching "can't-miss" investment opportunities to elderly investors and retirees, some of whom are urged to liquidate retirement accounts to purchase OTC liens.

"This is borderline criminal," said Westover. "Convincing someone to drain their 401(k) to buy a tax lien on a burned-down house is the financial equivalent of selling a losing lottery ticket. These educators are pushing fool's gold, and people are getting hurt."

#### Trust Verified Sources for Tax Lien Education

The NTLA advises all investors to avoid these sales pitches and to pursue education from reliable sources. New investors in particular are urged to seek training from accredited professionals before entering the market. The association's own platform, [NTLAUniversity.com](https://NTLAUniversity.com), offers training courses, webinars, and certification programs designed to equip investors with the knowledge they need to make informed, strategic decisions.

#### Real Tools, Real Experts, Real Community

One of the NTLA's greatest value propositions is its [member community](#), which includes access to legitimate due diligence tools, proprietary data providers, and hands-on resources that help both novice and sophisticated investors analyze "safe" tax lien opportunities. The majority of Certified Tax Lien Professionals™ have over 15 years of experience in the industry. Membership

in the NTLA offers the opportunity to network with seasoned professionals who understand the nuances of every jurisdiction and can offer valuable guidance in a complex marketplace.

“Tax lien investing can be safe, profitable, and socially impactful when done responsibly,” said Westover. “But uninformed decisions based on bad advice can lead to devastating losses. The NTLA will continue to advocate for investor protection and industry accountability.”

#### About the National Tax Lien Association (NTLA)

Founded in 1997, the National Tax Lien Association is the only non-profit organization dedicated to promoting integrity, transparency, and best practices in the tax lien and tax deed investment industry. The NTLA supports municipalities, investors, attorneys, and service providers through education, advocacy, and professional standards that strengthen the tax collection process and safeguard communities. Learn more at [ntla.org](https://ntla.org).

SOURCE: National Tax Lien Association

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