

New Federal Remedy Opens the Door for Victims of Moving Scams to Seek Justice Without Going to Court

A newly activated DOT enforcement process offers moving scam victims a long-overdue alternative to lawsuits.

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Segah Yildirim

Moving Protection Organization ([USMPO](#)) announced today that a newly recognized federal administrative process may provide long-overdue relief for victims of household goods moving scams — offering consumers a practical, low-cost alternative to traditional lawsuits.

Millions of Americans move each year. While many moving companies operate ethically, thousands of consumers continue to report serious abuses, including bait-and-switch pricing, excessive overcharges, hostage-load tactics,

and other violations of federal transportation law. These practices have been documented in government investigations, congressional hearings, and national media coverage, including Newsweek’s 2023 exposé describing the moving industry as operating with a “license to steal.”

Yet for most victims, meaningful remedies have remained out of reach.

“Consumers are often scammed out of a few thousand dollars — too much to ignore, but not enough to attract legal representation,” said Segah Yildirim, founder of USMPO. “For years, victims have been left with no realistic path to recovery.”

A Complaint System With Little Relief:

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has long encouraged victims to submit complaints to its National Consumer Complaint Database (NCCDB). While thousands comply, the process rarely results in individual relief.

As explained during a recent Senate hearing by Lewie Pugh, Executive Vice President of the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA):

“It seems like this is where all complaints go to die at FMCSA. Usually, they hear nothing back. Or if they get anything, it’s just ‘Hey, thanks for letting us know.’”

A Little-Used Law, Now Activated:

More than thirty years ago, when Congress transferred household goods moving regulation from the Interstate Commerce Commission to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), it included a critical provision granting “rights and remedies of persons injured by carriers or brokers.” That statute allows consumers to seek relief either in court or by complaint to the Secretary of Transportation.

While industry groups have occasionally used this authority in federal court, no private consumer had successfully invoked the administrative remedy — until now.

A Breakthrough Case at DOT:

In March 2025, an elderly consumer who was victimized during an interstate move filed a private enforcement complaint directly with the Secretary of Transportation against a Florida-based moving broker. After months of review, the Department of Transportation formally advanced the case.

On January 6, 2026, the DOT issued a “Referral of Household Goods Broker Complaint” for adjudication before an administrative law judge in the Department’s Office of Hearings.

The case, including the consumer’s complaint and supporting exhibits, is publicly available on regulations.gov under [Docket No. FMCSA-2026-0069](#).

Why This Matters for Consumers:

According to USMPO, this administrative hearing process represents a significant new tool for victims of moving scams involving regulatory violations.

Key features include:

- Claims focus on violations of federal transportation regulations, not property damage
- Consumers must submit documentation such as contracts, bills of lading, and tariff agreements
- Legal representation is not required for either party
- Proceedings are more informal, faster, and far less expensive than court litigation

“The system isn’t perfect, but it finally gives consumers a realistic enforcement option,” USMPO said. “For the first time, scam victims can present their case directly to the federal agency responsible for regulating movers — without needing tens of thousands of dollars to hire a

lawyer.”

A New Path Forward

USMPO believes this development marks a meaningful shift in how consumer harm in the household goods moving industry can be addressed — both at the individual consumer level and through broader regulatory insight.

Alongside raising awareness of this newly activated administrative enforcement option, USMPO has built a [consumer complaint intake and analysis system](#) designed to work directly with moving consumers. Through this system, USMPO assists consumers in documenting complaints, reviewing supporting records, and identifying potential regulatory violations, while also evaluating complaint data across the industry.

At the individual level, USMPO makes efforts to help consumers understand their options, organize relevant documentation, and pursue appropriate remedies when moving disputes arise.

At the industry level, USMPO conducts aggregated analysis of verified, published consumer complaints to identify:

- Recurring regulatory violations and scam tactics
- Industry-wide trends in pricing disputes and coercive practices
- Carrier and broker response behavior
- Resolution outcomes following consumer complaints

All published data reflects verified complaints reviewed by USMPO and is presented in aggregate form, without identifying individual companies or consumers.

This dual approach allows USMPO to both assist affected consumers directly and provide regulators and enforcement authorities with clearer, evidence-based insight into patterns of noncompliance across the household goods moving industry.

“FMCSA enforcement is driven by patterns, but consumer harm happens one move at a time,” USMPO said. “By addressing complaints individually while analyzing them collectively, we can support consumers today and help regulators better understand where oversight and enforcement efforts are most needed.”

USMPO plans to publish educational materials explaining when this administrative remedy may apply, how consumers can prepare and submit a compliant filing, and how verified complaint data can inform broader accountability efforts within the industry.

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