

[By Matt Henson](#)

Congressman Peter Welch is introducing legislation to combat what he calls a growing epidemic of scams.

Right now the Congressman said there is little law enforcement can do to stop what has grown to be a \$40 billion a year crime that mainly targets seniors. Last year alone Vermonters lost hundreds of thousands of dollars to scammers. Many of the schemes originate in Jamaica.

"The nature and extent of these scams -- and it is a nationwide problem -- would have more influence with federal authorities on their taking action, because trust me, there is nothing the Vermont Attorney General's office can do in Jamaica to investigate and then prosecute those who are violating our laws," said Vermont Attorney General Bill Sorrell.

Welch's legislation would create a special office within the Federal Telecommunications Commission. The office would focus on monitoring and educating people about scams via mail, email and telephone.