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Descendants of Armenian Genocide File Class Action Against Insurer

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Descendants of the Armenian genocide filed another class action against an insurance company, claiming they are entitled to benefits that should have been paid to the beneficiaries of their ancestors. The class action was filed on Monday against Aviva PLC, a British firm, which insured individuals during the Armenian genocide. The suit is the latest to involve insurance firms targeted for policies sold to Armenians from 1915 to 1923.

Amanda Bronstad

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Descendants of the [Armenian genocide](#) filed another class action against an insurance company, claiming they are entitled to benefits that should have been paid to the beneficiaries of their ancestors. The class action was filed on Monday against [Aviva PLC](#), a British firm, which insured individuals during the Armenian genocide. *Baghtchedjian v. Aviva*, No. CV08-cv-06030 (C.D. Calif.)

The suit is the latest to involve insurance firms targeted for policies sold during the Armenian genocide. Others include [New York Life Insurance Co.](#), which in 2004 [agreed to pay \\$20 million to settle similar claims](#), and [AXA S.A.](#), which agreed to a [\\$17 million settlement in 2005](#).

The Armenian genocide is believed to have killed more than 1.5 million Armenians from 1915 to 1923.

Aviva is the successor firm to Norwich Union Life Insurance Society and Commercial Union Insurance Co., which sold insurance to Armenians who lived in the Turkish Ottoman Empire before the genocide.

The lead plaintiffs, Raffi Baghtchedjian and Nisan Papazyan, both residents of Los Angeles County, are suing on behalf of all Armenians who owned life insurance policies at Norwich Union and life and fire insurance policies at Commercial Union from 1880 and 1930 and whose beneficiaries were not paid -- a potential class of about 10,000 individuals.

Vartkes Yeghiayan of Glendale, Calif.-based [Yeghiayan & Associates](#) represents the plaintiffs. He was involved in similar cases against New York Life and Deutsche Bank.

Calls to an Aviva spokesman were not returned.

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