Eddie Long Sued for Alleged Role in Ponzi Scheme

Bishop Eddie Long is facing another run in with the law.

Just months after the Atlanta megachurch pastor quietly settled with four young men who accused him of sexual misconduct—and just weeks after he settled a $2 million lawsuit involving a real estate venture—the embattled bishop is now facing a third civil lawsuit.

This time, members of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church are claiming Long encouraged them to invest in what appears to be a Ponzi scheme. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the scheme promised 20 percent annual returns on safe investments. Investors reportedly didn't know their money was being diverted to a failing company.

The lawsuit, which was filed against the senior pastor of New Birth in Lithonia on Wednesday, calls Long's proposition a "Ponzi scheme."

The *Journal* reports that the suit was filed on behalf of 10 church members who claim they lost more than $1 million. The suit contends that Long and New Birth used their "confidential/fiduciary relationship" to coerce them into investing with Ephren Taylor Jr., the former CEO of City Capital Corp. in Chicago.

The *Journal* cites another portion of the complaint that claims Long told the congregation he was "responsible for everyone I bring before you and what they say" just before introducing Taylor. City Capital is also named as a defendant in the suit. Taylor could not be reached for comment.

New Birth has publicly declined to comment at this time. Art Franklin, a spokesperson for Long and the church, pointed the

Journal to an earlier news release where Long asked Taylor “to do the right thing by quickly resolving this matter with a positive outcome.”