

February 5, 2009

MONEYMAKER AND FORTRESS SECURED, INC. ORDERED TO CEASE ACTIVITY IN NORTH DAKOTA

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem has issued a Cease & Desist Order against “Mike Bruce Moneymaker,” also known as Bruce Moneymaker, of San Diego, California and his business Fortress Secured, Inc. of Las Vegas, Nevada for alleged violations of North Dakota’s consumer fraud, false advertising, and do not call laws.

After receiving complaints about violations of the state’s “do not call” law, Stenehjem’s Consumer Protection Division initiated an investigation of Moneymaker and Fortress Secured’s solicitations. The entity purports to offer a cash advance up to \$1,500, and/or an auto loan, or a guaranteed \$10,000 credit line and stored value credit card. The entity, however, is not a lender, auto lessor, or credit card issuer. It merely forwards loan requests to five lenders. “I’m concerned that the solicitations are merely a ruse to secure personal and banking information from consumers so that electronic transfers can be made, with or without authorization, from consumers’ accounts,” Stenehjem said.

Once consumers provide their bank account numbers they are automatically enrolled in memberships including a free government grant program, medical discount program, or a \$10,000 line of credit and stored value credit card membership. If the consumers do not properly cancel the memberships within a 7-day trial period, their bank accounts are charged one-time fees of \$40 to \$50, followed by ongoing monthly fees ranging from \$17 to \$20 per month.

The business and its owners refused to voluntarily discontinue their illegal business practices in North Dakota. Therefore, Stenehjem has ordered the entity and related individuals to cease all solicitations in North Dakota.

“It is unacceptable to solicit North Dakota consumers to enroll in, among other things, a membership for nonexistent free government grants, and then charge those consumers to learn about bogus government grants,” Stenehjem said. “These solicitations do not indicate a legitimate business entity.”

According to Parrell Grossman, Director of the Consumer Protection Division, consumers should be very leery of such solicitations. “Cash advances or guaranteed lines of credit from strangers on the phone should raise red flags,” Grossman said.

Consumers with questions should contact the Consumer Protection Division toll free at 1-800-472-2600 or 701-328-3404.

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