

October 25, 2005

## **STENEHJEM ISSUES CEASE & DESIST ORDER AGAINST BOGUS CANADIAN UNITED CLAIM CENTERS**

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, on October 24, 2005, has issued a Cease & Desist Order against a Quebec man, Brian Brunton-Guerard doing business as United Claim Centers, among other names including “Ensured Priority Service,” “Find Solutions Contract Center,” and “Home Shopping Network.Com.”

“This individual is now prohibited from continuing to defraud North Dakota consumers with this obvious scam,” Stenehjem said. Stenehjem alleges the “business” has engaged in deceptive acts and practices including stating or implying to consumers that 1) they are entitled to “claim” \$8,200 in Canadian funds, 2) there is no purchase necessary in claiming or collecting such funds, but then charging various fees without delivering the account, 3) the consumers are entitled to property from the Unclaimed Property Division of the State Land Department, and 4) consumers have won or been selected to participate in sweepstakes.

Brunton-Guerard is under federal criminal indictment in U.S. District Court in the Central District of California in Los Angeles, California. The charges involve wire fraud with enhanced penalties for telemarketing fraud against the elderly. “Mr. Brunton-Guerard is now on notice that he will not be permitted to rip-off North Dakota consumers from a base of operations in Canada,” said Stenehjem.

Stenehjem directed the Consumer Protection Division to initiate the investigation as a result of consumer complaints filed with and telephone calls to the Consumer Protection Division, as well as the Unclaimed Property Division of the State Land Department.

According to Parrell Grossman, Director of the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division, Brunton-Guerard will face stiff penalties for continued violations of North Dakota law. “Violations of the Cease & Desist Order will result in fines of \$1,000 per violation, in addition to up to \$5,000 for violations of the consumer fraud law,” Grossman said.

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