NORTH DAKOTA CUSTOMERS TO RECEIVE ALMOST $400,000 IN REFUNDS FROM NATIONAL E-BOOK PRICE FIXING SETTLEMENT

BISMARCK, ND – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem announced today that, starting this week, North Dakota consumers who purchased certain E-books between April 1, 2010 and May 21, 2012 will begin receiving refunds by account credits or checks.

The refunds are required as a part of a settlement in a 2012 E-book price-fixing lawsuit, which was brought by Stenehjem and attorneys general from 32 other states against Apple, Inc. and five of the six largest E-book publishers in the country. The lawsuit claims that the E-book publishers and Apple, Inc. conspired with each other to eliminate retail price competition in order to fix and raise E-book prices, in violation of antitrust laws. The total amount of refunds to be issued to North Dakota residents from this settlement is approximately $389,800.

“Competitors cannot be allowed to get away with conspiring to fix and raise prices. The publishers and Apple violated the antitrust laws against price fixing, resulting in consumers paying higher prices for their E-books than they should have,” said Stenehjem. “The refunds will allow consumers who were overcharged for E-Books to recover some of the loss caused by this price fixing conspiracy,” he continued.


The amount of the individual refunds is based on the number of eligible E-books the consumer purchased between April 1, 2010 and May 21, 2012. Whether a consumer receives an account credit or refund check depends on the retailer through which the E-book was purchased. Parrell Grossman, director of the Consumer Protection division, said that consumers who purchased E-Books during the claim period should review their emails for communications from their retailer (for example, Amazon or Barnes & Noble) or from the Settlement Administrator regarding the refund credits or checks.

Apple declined to settle the claims against it, and the case against Apple remains pending. If the attorneys general prevail, additional account credits or checks will be available to consumers in the future.

For more information on the E-Book settlement, please visit www.ebookagsettlements.com.

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