

November 17, 2008

### **SEVEN COMPANIES PAY TO SETTLE ROBOCALL COMPLAINTS**

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem has entered into settlements with seven different companies to address prerecorded telemarketing calls, or "robocalls" made to North Dakota residents. Each company has agreed to comply with North Dakota's Do Not Call law and made a payment in lieu of civil penalties.

"If you go to the mall and a clerk asks you for your telephone number when you are paying, some retailers consider that permission to place telemarketing calls to you," warned Stenehjem. "This Office does not agree. Like other personal information such as your Social Security Number, you do not need to give out your telephone number to someone just because they ask for it."

SmartReply, Inc., dba VoiceBlast, of California paid \$5,000 to settle a complaint against it. They paid \$1,000 earlier in 2008 to address a different complaint. Voice & Mobile Broadcast Corporation, dba VMBC, of California paid \$5,000 to resolve its investigation. Voice Marketing, Inc. of California paid \$1,000. SmartReply, VMBC and Voice Marketing are in the business of making telemarketing calls on behalf of other business. The four other companies settling with the Attorney General were retailers: Payless Shoesource, Inc. of Kansas (\$2,500), Tween Brands, Inc., dba Limited Too, of Ohio (\$2,500) and The Talbots, Inc., of Massachusetts (\$1,000) and E Marketing Services, Inc. (\$1,000) of Florida.

"It is important the businesses actually making the calls and the businesses hiring those callers understand and comply with the robocall law," Stenehjem said. "We will continue to hold both the callers and the retailers accountable."

###