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NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 4, 2003

Attorney General Files Suit Against Fraudulent Travel Agency

(Juneau, AK) – Attorney General Gregg D. Renkes announced the filing of a consumer protection lawsuit against Alaska Adventures & Accommodations, known as Ask Alaska Travel and Tours, and its owner, Jennifer Christensen. “Consumers from across the country report their dream vacations to Alaska were ruined by the actions of this business. Visitors have arrived in the state only to find that reservations paid for months in advance were never made, and that they were forced to pay again in order to complete their vacations.” Renkes said.

Ask Alaska is an Anchorage-based business that provided tours and travel services to consumers visiting Alaska. Recently, however, 40 consumer complaints have been filed with the Attorney General’s Office and the Better Business Bureau. Consumers have reported that Ask Alaska made unauthorized charges to their credit cards with multiple billings, overcharges, or charges for services provided to other travelers.

The complaint filed by the attorney general alleges that Christensen violated Alaska’s Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act and committed fraud and misrepresentation by making unauthorized charges to consumer credit cards; by accepting payments from consumers for lodging, transportation, and other services but failing to pay vendors for those services; failing to respond to requests for refunds by consumers; and failing to provide services as represented.

“These business practices, if true, will harm all the honest members of the tourism industry. I hope this lawsuit sends a message that our state will protect both consumers visiting our wonderful state and the legitimate businesses serving these visitors.” Renkes added.

The complaint, filed on August 1, 2003, accompanied a Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order. That order was signed by an Superior Court Judge today. The order requires Christensen to cease business activity, stops her from transferring or using business or personal assets, and prohibits her from destroying or concealing business records. Christensen is also required to contact all current clients to advise them of the status of the business and to post a consumer advisory on the Ask Alaska website.

Consumers who believe they have been a victim of unfair or deceptive business practices by Ask Alaska are encouraged to file a complaint with the Attorney General’s Office. Complaint forms can be requested by calling (907) 269-5200, or downloaded at <http://www.law.state.ak.us/pdf/consumer/complaint.pdf>.

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