

February 17, 2012

ATTORNEY GENERAL STENEHJEM ISSUES CEASE AND DESIST ORDER AGAINST UST DEVELOPMENT, INC.

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem today issued a Cease & Desist Order against UST, Development, Inc. also known as UST, US Telcom and US Telecom, and David Bell, individually for violations of North Dakota’s consumer fraud laws.

According to Stenehjem, the Consumer Protection Division has received multiple complaints from local governmental agencies and private businesses in North Dakota indicating that UST is sending invoices for a telecom maintenance agreement that the entities have not solicited or purchased. “These fraudulent invoice solicitations are banned by North Dakota law,” said Stenehjem. “The Better Business Bureau has received 184 complaints against UST since August 2011. With the North Dakota complaints, I am immediately banning this business from conducting these fraudulent solicitations in North Dakota. Stenehjem noted that the Better Business Bureau complaint numbers increased from 180 to 184 in just the last day.”

Stenehjem’s Consumer Protection Division is investigating the fraudulent solicitations and has not received any response from UST. According to Parrell Grossman, director of the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division, these bogus invoice solicitations are a serious concern because these schemes can be very successful. “Employees of local governmental agencies and private businesses often unwittingly approve these invoices and process payment because the invoices look legitimate and they assume the services were previously approved by another staff member,” Grossman said.

Consumers with questions or complaints against UST Development for payments made may contact the Consumer Protection Division at 701-328-3404 or 1-800-472-2600, to request a complaint form or may obtain the complaint form on the Attorney General’s website www.ag.nd.gov.

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[Cease & Desist Order](#)