

4445

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N   S E N A T E

April 23, 2009

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Introduced by Sen. KRUGER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Consumer Protection

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to availability for sale of advertised merchandise

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1     Section 1. The general business law is amended by adding a new section  
2     397-b to read as follows:  
3     S 397-B. AVAILABILITY FOR SALE OF ADVERTISED MERCHANDISE.     1.     A  
4     RETAILER WHO ADVERTISES AN ARTICLE OF MERCHANDISE FOR SALE AT A PRICE  
5     WHICH IS REDUCED, IN GOOD FAITH, TO A PRICE BELOW THE PRICE SUCH ARTI-  
6     CLES ARE USUALLY SOLD OR OFFERED FOR SALE FOR IN THE STORE, AND DOES NOT  
7     HAVE SUCH ARTICLE AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE ADVERTISED PERIOD SHALL, ON  
8     THE REQUEST OF A PURCHASER OF SUCH ARTICLE, OFFER TO ISSUE A RAINCHECK  
9     UNLESS ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS EXISTS:  
10     (A)     THE ADVERTISEMENT IS MADE IN RELATION TO MAIL ORDER MERCHANDISE  
11     AS REGULATED BY SECTION THREE HUNDRED NINETY-SIX-M OF THIS ARTICLE.  
12     (B)     THE ADVERTISEMENT IS OF AN ARTICLE THAT IS ONE OF A KIND AND THE  
13     ADVERTISEMENT CLEARLY AND CONSPICUOUSLY STATES SUCH FACT.  
14     (C)     THE ADVERTISEMENT CLEARLY AND CONSPICUOUSLY STATES THE SPECIFIC  
15     QUANTITY OF THE ARTICLE AVAILABLE AT THE OUTSET OF THE SALE.  
16     (D)     THE ADVERTISEMENT CLEARLY AND CONSPICUOUSLY STATES THAT A RAIN-  
17     CHECK IS NOT AVAILABLE. THIS EXCLUSION MAY ONLY BE USED IF THE ARTICLE  
18     WILL NOT BE OFFERED FOR SALE FOR AT LEAST ONE HUNDRED TWENTY DAYS FROM  
19     THE EXPIRATION DATE OF THE ADVERTISEMENT.  
20     2.     A RAINCHECK ISSUED PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION ONE OF THIS SECTION  
21     SHALL ENTITLE THE HOLDER TO PURCHASE, AT THE STORE ISSUING SUCH RAIN-  
22     CHECK, THE ADVERTISED ARTICLE AT THE ADVERTISED PRICE WITHIN SIXTY DAYS  
23     FROM THE DATE OF ISSUANCE OR FOR A PERIOD OF TEN BUSINESS DAYS FROM THE  
24     FIRST DATE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE ARTICLE, WHICHEVER SHALL BE LATER.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[ ] is old law to be omitted.

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1 THE ISSUANCE OF SUCH RAINCHECK SHALL CONSTITUTE AN AGREEMENT ON THE  
2 PART OF THE SELLER TO SUPPLY SUCH ARTICLE AT SUCH PRICE. NOTHING  
3 CONTAINED HEREIN SHALL PROHIBIT A SELLER FROM OFFERING A SIMILAR ARTICLE  
4 OF EQUAL OR GREATER VALUE EITHER DURING THE PERIOD COVERED BY SUCH  
5 ADVERTISEMENT OF THE ARTICLE OR WITHIN SIXTY DAYS FROM THE DATE OF ISSU-  
6 ANCE OF THE RAINCHECK, OR THE SELLER AND PURCHASER FROM AGREEING TO  
7 LENGTHEN THE REDEMPTION PERIOD OF SUCH RAINCHECK. IF THE PURCHASER  
8 ACCEPTS SUBSTITUTION, SUCH SUBSTITUTION SHALL CONSTITUTE COMPLIANCE WITH  
9 THE PROVISIONS OF SUBDIVISION ONE OF THIS SECTION.

10 3. THE RAINCHECK SHALL INCLUDE AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- 11 (A) NAME, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE ISSUER.
- 12 (B) DATE OF ISSUANCE.
- 13 (C) LAST DATE THAT THE RAINCHECK CAN BE REDEEMED.
- 14 (D) NAME, DESCRIPTION AND QUANTITY DESIRED OF THE ARTICLE.
- 15 (E) THE ADVERTISED PRICE.

16 4. THE RAINCHECK SHALL CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:

17 YOU MAY REDEEM THIS RAINCHECK FOR THE ADVERTISED ITEM DESCRIBED ON THE  
18 OTHER SIDE WITHIN SIXTY DAYS OF ISSUANCE OR FOR A PERIOD OF TEN BUSINESS  
19 DAYS FROM THE FIRST DATE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE ITEM, WHICHEVER SHALL BE  
20 LATER.

21 YOU WILL PAY ONLY THE ADVERTISED PRICE FOR THE ITEM.

22 YOU ARE UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO BUY THE ITEM.

23 5. EVERY RETAILER WHO ADVERTISES SUCH AN ARTICLE OF MERCHANDISE FOR  
24 SALE, WHICH IS NOT AVAILABLE, SHALL NOTIFY THE PURCHASER NO LATER THAN  
25 FIFTEEN DAYS AFTER THE RECEIPT OF SUCH MERCHANDISE BY THE SELLER THAT  
26 THE MERCHANDISE IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE.

27 6. THERE SHALL BE, WITHIN EACH RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT THAT ADVERTISES  
28 ITEMS FOR SALE AT A PRICE BELOW THE USUAL SELLING PRICE, A CLEAR AND  
29 CONSPICUOUSLY POSTED SIGN, POSTER OR PLACARD INDICATING WHERE A RAIN-  
30 CHECK CAN BE OBTAINED.

31 7. IT SHALL BE AN AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE TO AN ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THIS  
32 SECTION THAT THE SELLER WAS UNABLE TO HONOR A RAINCHECK WITHIN THE  
33 REDEMPTION PERIOD BECAUSE SUCH SELLER DID NOT RECEIVE A REORDER OF THE  
34 ADVERTISED ARTICLE FROM A SUPPLIER THROUGH NO FAULT OF THE SELLER  
35 PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE SELLER MUST MAINTAIN RECORDS SUFFICIENT TO  
36 SHOW THAT THE ADVERTISED SALE ITEMS WERE REORDERED IN ADEQUATE TIME FOR  
37 DELIVERY AND IN SUFFICIENT QUANTITY TO FULFILL RAINCHECK OBLIGATIONS.

38 8. THIS SECTION SHALL NOT APPLY TO A PURCHASE FOR RESALE.

39 9. NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO RELIEVE THE SELLER  
40 FROM ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW PROHIBITING THE ADVERTISING OF GOODS OR  
41 SERVICES WITH THE INTENT NOT TO MEET REASONABLY EXPECTED DEMAND.

42 10. NO PURCHASER SHALL BE REQUIRED TO PREPAY THE PURCHASE PRICE OR ANY  
43 PART THEREOF IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A RAINCHECK.

44 11. A PERSON WHO VIOLATES ANY PROVISION OF THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A  
45 FALSE AND MISLEADING ADVERTISING PRACTICE AND SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS  
46 OF ARTICLE TWENTY-TWO-A OF THIS CHAPTER.

47 12. NOTHING HEREIN SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO RESTRICT THE POWER OF ANY  
48 COUNTY, CITY, TOWN OR VILLAGE TO ADOPT AND ENFORCE ADDITIONAL LOCAL  
49 LAWS, ORDINANCES, OR REGULATIONS WHICH EXCEED THE MINIMUM APPLICABLE  
50 STANDARDS IN THIS SECTION.

51 S 2. This act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after it shall  
52 have become a law.