

10357

I N A S S E M B L Y

May 24, 2012

Introduced by M. of A. MILLMAN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Aging

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to requiring disclosures in advertisements using a senior specific designation

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
2 350-b-1 to read as follows:
3 S 350-B-1. DISCLOSURES REQUIRED IN ADVERTISEMENTS USING A SENIOR
4 SPECIFIC DESIGNATION. 1. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "SENIOR SPECIFIC
5 DESIGNATION" SHALL MEAN A TITLE, PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATION, CREDENTIAL,
6 CERTIFICATION, OR PROFESSIONAL DESCRIPTION THAT INDICATES THE PERSON HAS
7 EXPERTISE OR TRAINING IN ISSUES SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO SENIORS IN THEIR
8 FIELD AND HAS:
9 (A) BEEN REGISTERED OR LICENSED BY A MUNICIPALITY; OR
10 (B) RECEIVED PERMISSION TO USE SUCH TITLE, PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATION,
11 OR PROFESSIONAL DESCRIPTION FROM AN INDEPENDENT OR INDUSTRY ORGANIZA-
12 TION.
13 2. (A) ANY PERSON OR BUSINESS WHO USES A SENIOR SPECIFIC DESIGNATION
14 IN MAKING REPRESENTATIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF INDUCING, OR WHICH ARE
15 LIKELY TO INDUCE, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, THE PURCHASE OF THE INDIVID-
16 UAL'S SERVICES SHALL CLEARLY AND PROMINENTLY DISCLOSE, IN ANY ADVERTISE-
17 MENT AND IN WRITING TO ANY PROSPECTIVE CLIENT AT THE INITIAL MEETING OR
18 CONSULTATION WITH SUCH PROSPECTIVE CLIENT, THE BASIS OR SOURCE OF SUCH
19 SENIOR SPECIFIC DESIGNATION, INCLUDING WHETHER THE SENIOR SPECIFIC
20 DESIGNATION WAS CREATED BY THE PERSON OR BUSINESS USING IT. FOR THE
21 PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "CLEARLY AND PROMINENTLY" MEANS:
22 (1) IN WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS, INCLUDING PRINT AND THOSE MADE THROUGH
23 AN ELECTRONIC MEDIUM (SUCH AS VIDEO AND INTERACTIVE MEDIA INCLUDING, BUT
24 NOT LIMITED TO, THE INTERNET, ONLINE SERVICES, AND ELECTRONIC MAIL), THE
25 MESSAGE SHALL BE IN A TYPE SIZE SUFFICIENTLY NOTICEABLE FOR AN ORDINARY
26 CONSUMER TO READ AND COMPREHEND IT, IN TYPE THAT CONTRASTS WITH THE
27 BACKGROUND AGAINST WHICH IT APPEARS; AND

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

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1 (2) IN ORAL COMMUNICATIONS, THE MESSAGE SHALL BE DELIVERED IN A VOLUME
2 SUFFICIENT FOR AN ORDINARY CONSUMER TO HEAR IT AND COMPREHEND IT. SUCH
3 MESSAGE SHALL BE IN UNDERSTANDABLE LANGUAGE AND SYNTAX REGARDLESS OF HOW
4 THE MESSAGE IS DISSEMINATED.

5 (B) IF ANY COMMUNICATION IS PRESENTED SOLELY THROUGH ORAL, WRITTEN, OR
6 VISUAL MEANS, THE MESSAGE DISSEMINATED PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH (A) OF THIS
7 SUBDIVISION SHALL BE MADE THROUGH THE SAME MEANS.

8 (C) NO PERSON OR BUSINESS SHALL MAKE ANY COMMUNICATION THAT MITIGATES
9 ANY MESSAGE DISSEMINATED PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH (A) OF THIS SUBDIVISION
10 OR THAT IS CONTRARY TO OR INCONSISTENT WITH SUCH MESSAGE. THE REQUIRE-
11 MENTS OF THIS SUBDIVISION SUPPLEMENT, AND SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED TO
12 LIMIT, THE OBLIGATIONS OF ANY PROFESSIONAL REGISTERED OR LICENSED PURSU-
13 ANT TO ANY OTHER SECTION OF LAW AND REGULATIONS THEREUNDER, NOR SHALL
14 THEY BE CONSTRUED TO AUTHORIZE THE PRACTICE OF ANY LICENSED PROFESSION
15 NOR THE OFFER OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BY ANY UNLICENSED PERSON.

16 3. IN ADDITION TO ANY CIVIL PENALTY AVAILABLE UNDER SECTION THREE
17 HUNDRED FIFTY-D OF THIS ARTICLE, WHENEVER THERE SHALL BE AN ACTUAL
18 VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION, AN APPLICATION MAY BE MADE TO A COURT OR
19 JUSTICE HAVING JURISDICTION TO ISSUE AN INJUNCTION, UPON NOTICE TO THE
20 DEFENDANT OF NOT LESS THAN FIVE DAYS, TO ENJOIN AND RESTRAIN SUCH ACTUAL
21 OR THREATENED VIOLATION. IF IT SHALL APPEAR TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE
22 COURT OR JUSTICE THAT THE DEFENDANT IS IN FACT ASSUMING, ADOPTING OR
23 USING SUCH SENIOR SPECIFIC DESIGNATION OR IS ABOUT TO ASSUME, ADOPT OR
24 USE SUCH SENIOR SPECIFIC DESIGNATION AND THAT THE ASSUMPTION, ADOPTION
25 OR USE OF SUCH SENIOR SPECIFIC DESIGNATION MAY DECEIVE OR MISLEAD THE
26 PUBLIC, AN INJUNCTION MAY BE ISSUED BY SAID COURT OR JUSTICE ENJOINING
27 AND RESTRAINING SUCH ACTUAL VIOLATION WITHOUT REQUIRING PROOF THAT ANY
28 PERSON HAS IN FACT BEEN DECEIVED OR MISLED THEREBY.

29 S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.