

2538

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N   A S S E M B L Y

January 16, 2015

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Introduced by M. of A. GRAF, TENNEY, MONTESANO, RAIA -- Multi-Sponsored  
by -- M. of A. SEPULVEDA -- read once and referred to the Committee  
on Consumer Affairs and Protection

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to communications  
by retail stores attempting to settle civil actions deriving from  
larceny prosecutions

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

1     Section 1. The general business law is amended by adding a new section  
2     349-f to read as follows:  
3     S 349-F. CIVIL PROCEEDINGS IN LARCENY PROSECUTIONS. 1. WHENEVER A  
4     MERCHANT OR RETAIL STORE ATTEMPTS TO SETTLE A CIVIL ACTION THAT IS  
5     DERIVATIVE OF A CRIMINAL PROSECUTION COMMENCED UNDER ARTICLE ONE HUNDRED  
6     FIFTY-FIVE OF THE PENAL LAW, ALL COMMUNICATIONS PERTAINING TO SUCH  
7     ATTEMPTED SETTLEMENT SHALL CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT, WHICH SHALL,  
8     IF WRITTEN, BE IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE, IN FONT LARGER THAN THE REMAINDER  
9     OF THE COMMUNICATION, AND, IF SPOKEN, READ IN ITS ENTIRETY:  
10    THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO REACH A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT IN A CIVIL ACTION  
11    FOR SATISFACTION OF DAMAGES RELATED TO A CRIMINAL PROSECUTION. YOU HAVE  
12    THE RIGHT TO REFUSE THIS OFFER. YOUR ACCEPTANCE OR REFUSAL OF THIS OFFER  
13    HAS NO EFFECT ON ANY CRIMINAL ACTION ARISING FROM THE EVENTS THAT LED TO  
14    THIS CIVIL ACTION. FAILURE TO ACCEPT THIS AGREEMENT MAY RESULT IN CIVIL  
15    LITIGATION AGAINST YOU.  
16    2. A MERCHANT OR RETAIL STORE THAT FAILS TO INCLUDE SUCH STATEMENT IN  
17    ANY COMMUNICATION WITH DEFENDANT SHALL BE STRICTLY LIABLE FOR:  
18    (A) ANY ACTUAL DAMAGES SUSTAINED BY DEFENDANT AS A RESULT OF SUCH  
19    FAILURE;  
20    (B) TREBLE THE AMOUNT SOUGHT BY THE MERCHANT OR RETAIL STORE IN ANY  
21    SUCH SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT. IN THE CASE OF MULTIPLE SETTLEMENT OFFERS,  
22    THE AMOUNT TO BE TREBLED SHALL BE THE HIGHEST SETTLEMENT AMOUNT SOUGHT  
23    BY SUCH MERCHANT OR RETAIL STORE;

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

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1 (C) IN THE CASE OF ANY SUCCESSFUL ACTION TO ENFORCE THE FOREGOING  
2 LIABILITY, THE COSTS OF THE ACTION, TOGETHER WITH A REASONABLE ATTOR-  
3 NEYS' FEE AS DETERMINED BY THE COURT. ON A FINDING BY THE COURT THAT AN  
4 ACTION UNDER THIS SECTION WAS BROUGHT IN BAD FAITH AND FOR THE PURPOSE  
5 OF HARASSMENT, THE COURT MAY AWARD TO THE DEFENDANT ATTORNEYS' FEES  
6 REASONABLE IN RELATION TO THE WORK EXPENDED AND COSTS.

7 S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.