



For Immediate Release
July 12, 2007

Contact: Robyn Ziegler
312-814-3118
877-844-5461 (TTY)
rziegler@atg.state.il.us

MADIGAN: SOME ILLINOIS CONSUMERS ELIGIBLE FOR RESTITUTION FROM AMERIQUEST

Claims must be submitted by September 10, 2007

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today said that nearly 22,000 Illinois consumers are eligible for more than \$14.5 million in restitution from Ameriquest Mortgage Company, and its related companies, as part of a \$325 million national settlement of a predatory lending lawsuit against the firm. Every state except Virginia, where Ameriquest does not conduct business, and the District of Columbia joined Madigan's office in the settlement.

The settlement resolves allegations that Ameriquest and its affiliates, among other things, misrepresented and failed to adequately disclose the terms of home loans, such as whether a loan carried a fixed or adjustable rate; charged excessive loan origination fees and prepayment penalties; refinanced borrowers into improper or inappropriate loans; and improperly inflated appraisals used to qualify borrowers for loans.

Under the settlement, more than 481,000 borrowers who were customers of Ameriquest Mortgage Company, Town and Country Credit Corporation, and AMC Mortgage Services, Inc. (formerly known as Bedford Home Loans) between January 1, 1999, and December 31, 2005, are eligible to receive restitution payments.

Madigan's office and the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation began sending letters and claim forms this week to 21,964 eligible Illinois consumers. To participate in the settlement and receive restitution, consumers must sign and mail the completed forms to the settlement administrator by September 10, 2007. The forms will indicate the minimum payment the consumer can expect to receive. However, the exact payment amount could be larger, depending on the number of eligible Illinois consumers who decide to participate in the settlement.

Attorney General Madigan encouraged consumers to study the claim forms and information and reply as soon as possible.

"Ameriquest's conduct put people at risk of losing their homes," Madigan said. "It is very important for those who were affected by Ameriquest's unfair and deceptive conduct to take advantage of the funds derived from this settlement."

Consumers who choose to seek restitution payments through the settlement will relinquish their right to file private lawsuits against Ameriquest related to the loans covered by the settlement. As a result, Madigan's office encouraged consumers to consult with a private attorney or, if they qualify, a legal services attorney before deciding whether to participate in the settlement. However, consumers who participate in the settlement do not give up any claim they may otherwise have if their home goes into foreclosure.

This week's settlement mailing includes a pamphlet containing "Frequently Asked Questions" about the claim form and provides additional information about the restitution process for Illinois' eligible consumers.

Consumers also can obtain detailed information about the settlement and eligibility for restitution by visiting the Settlement Administrator's website at www.ameriquetmultistatesettlement.com or by calling 1-800-420-5875. Hearing-impaired consumers may call 1-866-494-8274.

Assistant Attorneys General Tom James and Susan Ellis handled the case for Madigan's Consumer Protection Division.

-30-

[Return to July 2007 Press Releases](#)