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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

January 25, 2005

The Idaho Department of Finance Obtains Assurance of Discontinuance From Check 'n Go of Idaho, Inc.

(BOISE) January 25, 2005 – Gavin Gee, Director of the Idaho Department of Finance, today announced that the Department has entered into a settlement with Check 'n Go of Idaho, Inc., and has obtained an assurance from Check 'n Go that it will discontinue lending practices in Idaho that violate Idaho's payday lending law. Check 'n Go is a licensed payday lender headquartered in Mason, Ohio.

“This agreement resolves concerns that have arisen during an investigation of Check 'n Go's payday lending activities in Idaho,” said Gee. “The company has agreed to amend its practices when handling consumer personal banking account information and to notify its Idaho customers in writing that it may have obtained customers' checking account PIN numbers without customers' knowledge or consent.”

During several examinations of Check 'n Go outlets in Idaho the Department found that the company had obtained borrowers' checking account PIN numbers during the loan application process without borrowers' knowledge, Gee said. “Our examiners learned of instances where borrowers were asked to input PIN numbers into the lender's telephone key pad during the loan process. Check 'n Go would then electronically retrieve those PIN numbers and store them in its computer system for account balance verification purposes.”

The Idaho Department of Finance is charged with the administration of the Idaho Credit Code, which places licensing and compliance requirements on lenders who offer payday loans. “Although a payday lender may have a business interest in verifying the amount of funds in a checking account, no lender should obtain and use a borrower's private financial information without the borrower's express authorization and consent,” said Gee. “Obtaining private financial information in this fashion violates Idaho's payday loan statutes.” As a part of the settlement, Check 'n Go's written notification will advise its customers over the past 12 months that they may want to take steps to change their checking account PIN numbers.

Along with notification to borrowers who may have been affected, the settlement requires Check 'n Go to purge any written or electronic records of customer PIN numbers that it obtained without customers' authorization and consent. Also, the company paid an administrative penalty and investigative fees to the Department of Finance in the amount of \$50,000.

News Release
Page 2 of 2
January 25, 2005

The Idaho Department of Finance reminds residents that they may contact the Department if they have questions concerning the activities of payday lenders, including whether the company is properly licensed. Consumers can contact the Department at (208) 332-8002, or toll free within Idaho at 888-346-3378, or at its website at <http://finance.idaho.gov>.



Department of Finance Press Releases and other information can be found on the Internet via the worldwide web at <http://finance.idaho.gov> and may be obtained by contacting the Department at (208) 332-8004 or Idaho toll-free at 1-888-346-3378.