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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

December 27, 1999

JUDGMENT ENTERED AGAINST KETCHUM MAN INVOLVED IN FOREIGN CURRENCY SCHEME

Boise, Idaho . . . Gavin Gee, Director of the Idaho Department of Finance, today announced that the honorable Ronald J. Wilper, District Judge of the Fourth Judicial District Court in Boise, entered a Judgment and Permanent Injunction against Jeffrey S. Brendel of Ketchum, Idaho. The Judgment was entered after Brendel failed to defend himself in the State's lawsuit that was filed during October 1999. The Court's Order includes findings that Brendel violated Idaho law and imposes a permanent injunction barring future violations of Idaho securities and commodities statutes. The Court ordered that the defendant make refund offers to two Idaho investors and also restricted his future Idaho business activities.

As alleged in the Complaint and found by the Court, Brendel offered securities to Idaho residents in violation of the registration and anti-fraud provisions of the Idaho Securities Act and that Brendel's conduct also violated the Idaho Commodity Code.

More specifically, the complaint had alleged that Brendel was an employee of Austin Forex International, Inc. of Sun Valley and sold securities to Idaho residents in the form of investment contracts for trading in off-exchange foreign currencies through Austin Forex and its related companies. These investments were also alleged to be commodity contracts and that Brendel violated the registration and anti-fraud provisions of the Idaho Securities Act and the Idaho Commodity Code.

The default judgment was entered approximately one month after Austin Forex's former president, Russell Erxleben, Austin, Texas, pleaded guilty to conspiracy and securities fraud in Texas. In an earlier action, the Idaho Department of Finance had reached a settlement with Austin Forex International, Inc., a Texas company that controlled the Idaho office of Austin Forex. Refunds to Idaho investors of approximately \$1.3 million were paid at that time. During the past year, Austin Forex has filed for bankruptcy, leaving investors and creditors with millions of dollars in claims.

This injunction completes the State's case in the matter of the Austin Forex entities and local promoters.