



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Gansler Settles with BJ's Wholesale Club *Company Agrees to Stop Offering Deceptive Buy One Get One Free Coupons*

BALTIMORE, MD (April 1, 2010) - Attorney General Douglas F. Gansler today announced that his Consumer Protection Division has reached a settlement with BJ's Wholesale Club, Inc. (BJ's), the Massachusetts-based warehouse club operator. The Division alleged that BJ's provided consumers "Buy One Get One Free" coupons for certain goods, but the coupons' fine print limited the coupons' value to an amount that was, in some instances, less than the cost of the item. Consumers who used the "Buy One Get One Free" coupons were required to pay the difference between the limit of the coupons and the actual cost of the goods purchased. The Division alleged that during late 2008 and early 2009, more than 2,000 Maryland consumers were charged for items that should have been free.

"Businesses in Maryland must abide by the law and when they advertise something for free, it is just that – free," said Attorney General Gansler. "As a result of this agreement, BJ's has agreed to stop these deceptive practices and reimburse customers in Maryland."

BJ's denied that it violated the Consumer Protection Act. Under the terms of the settlement, BJ's is returning all monies it charged consumers in connection with the "Buy One Get One Free" coupons for goods that were supposed to be free. It has also agreed to not charge consumers any money in the future for goods that are supposed to be free. BJ's also agreed to pay the Consumer Protection Division a \$40,000 penalty.

Consumers who are eligible to receive refunds will receive a letter from BJ's along with a refund check. BJ's operates nine wholesale clubs in Maryland.