

Fifty-sixth Legislative Assembly, State of North Dakota, begun in the Capitol in the City of Bismarck, on Tuesday, the fifth day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine

SENATE BILL NO. 2419
(Senators W. Stenehjem, G. Nelson, Nething)
(Representatives DeKrey, Devlin, Dorso)

AN ACT to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-12 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to funds recovered by the attorney general; and to amend and reenact section 54-12-18 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the attorney general refund fund.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

SECTION 1. A new section to chapter 54-12 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

Recovery of funds - Limitations. All funds recovered by the attorney general as a result of negotiated settlements or court proceedings must be deposited in a special fund in the state treasury and may be appropriated only by the legislative assembly, except when:

1. A specific fund or special account is otherwise designated by law; or
2. The options open to the attorney general leave no choice as to the disposition of the proceeds if the state is to recover funds in a multistate settlement.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT. Section 54-12-18 of the 1997 Supplement to the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

54-12-18. Special fund established - Continuing appropriation. A special fund is established in the state treasury and designated as the attorney general refund fund. The attorney general shall deposit all moneys recovered by the consumer protection division for refunds to consumers in cases where persons or parties are found to have violated the consumer fraud laws, all costs, expenses, attorney's fees, and civil penalties collected by the division regarding any consumer protection or antitrust matter, all cash deposit bonds paid by applicants for a transient merchant's license who do not provide a surety bond, and all funds and fees collected by the gaming section for licensing tribal gaming and for the investigation of gaming employees, applicants, organizations, manufacturers, distributors, or tribes involved in state or tribal gaming. The moneys in the fund are appropriated, as necessary, for the following purposes:

1. To provide refunds of moneys recovered by the consumer protection and antitrust division on behalf of specifically named consumers;
2. To pay valid claims against cash deposit bonds posted by transient merchant licensees;
3. To refund, upon expiration of the two-year period after the expiration of the transient merchant's license, the balance of any cash deposit bond remaining after the payment of valid claims;
4. To pay costs, expenses, and attorney's fees and salaries incurred in the operation of the consumer protection division; and
5. To pay the actual costs of background investigations, licensing, and enforcement of gaming in the state or pursuant to Indian gaming compacts.

At the end of each fiscal year any moneys in the fund in excess of the amounts required for subsections 1, 2, 3, and 5 must be deposited in the general fund. The attorney general, with the concurrence of the

director of the office of management and budget, shall establish the necessary accounting procedures for use of the attorney general refund fund, particularly with respect to expenditures under subsection 4.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

Secretary of the Senate

Chief Clerk of the House

This certifies that the within bill originated in the Senate of the Fifty-sixth Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as Senate Bill No. 2419.

Senate Vote: Yeas 29 Nays 17 Absent 3

House Vote: Yeas 65 Nays 31 Absent 2

Secretary of the Senate

Received by the Governor at _____ M. on _____, 1999.

Approved at _____ M. on _____, 1999.

Governor

Filed in this office this _____ day of _____, 1999,
at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Secretary of State