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February 17, 2021
For Immediate Release

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Best Buy Stores LP Settles \$633,500 Consumer Lawsuit Over Pricing Accuracy

Price Accuracy and Return Policy Misrepresented

San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan announced today that her Consumer Protection Unit, working with the Alameda, Riverside, and Santa Barbara District Attorney's offices, has obtained a civil judgment in a consumer protection lawsuit against electronics retailer, Best Buy Stores LP. The total civil penalties, costs and restitution is \$633,570, of which the San Diego District Attorney's office will receive \$132,266. The case centered on Best Buy's price accuracy and return policy. The complaint alleges that Best Buy misrepresented the price of items sold and failed to accurately disclose material aspects of its return policy, among other violations.

The judgment requires Best Buy to institute changes in its business practices to ensure that the problems identified in the complaint do not recur. These include a renewed pricing accuracy program and enhanced disclosures of return policies. Without admitting liability, Best Buy agreed to pay \$558,570 in civil costs and penalties and \$75,000 in restitution. The civil penalties will be used for the enforcement of consumer protection laws.

"Consumers deserve to have price accuracy and full disclosure on return policies when spending their hard-earned money," DA Summer Stephan said. "Big retailers are on notice that our Consumer Protection Unit will hold them accountable on behalf of the public."

Best Buy had advertised "If you are not fully satisfied with your purchase, let us help you with a replacement, return or repair." But the retailer did not disclose that it had contracted with a third party, The Retail Equation, who monitored customer purchases and decided whether a California consumer should be allowed to return or exchange an item. California consumers were not informed about the third party or that they were limited to a certain number of returns per year. Restocking fees were also not conspicuously posted. Best Buy discontinued the use of The Retail Equation's services in April 2018, after meeting with prosecutors.

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The complaint was filed in Riverside County Superior Court. Best Buy cooperated in the resolution of the case. This case was handled for the San Diego District Attorney's, Consumer Protection Unit by prosecuting attorney Kathryn Turner.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.