



JAMES E. RISCH
Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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PHONY FINANCIAL FIRM ORDERED TO CEASE & DESIST

Fake Idaho Company Not Really a Money Transmitter

Boise, Idaho . . . Gavin Gee, Director of the Idaho Department of Finance, issued a Cease and Desist Order to an apparently fraudulent money transmission and financial services firm. Strong Funds, Inc. was ordered to cease violating the Idaho Financial Fraud Prevention Act by falsely holding itself out as a licensed money transmitter, a form of financial institution under the Act. The entity named in the Order has no connection to the Strong Funds mutual funds affiliated with Strong Financial Corporation nor with the Strong Funds mutual funds that were acquired by Wells Fargo, N.A. in December 2004.

The Order alleges that the Respondent, through its website, falsely represented that:

- a) the company was an Idaho corporation formed in 2002,
- b) the company's customer service location was in Meridian, Idaho, and
- c) the company was a "licensed financial services provider."

The State's investigation revealed that Strong Funds, Inc. maintained no license or registration with the Department of Finance as a bank, money transmitter, securities

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broker dealer or other type of authorized financial institution, nor was Strong Funds, Inc. licensed in any capacity with the Idaho Department of Insurance.

“It appears Strong Funds attempted to create a legitimate looking storefront on the Web to market it’s financial services around the world”, said Gee. “Information we have obtained causes us to believe that Strong Funds, Inc. recruited employees who would then be used as unwitting conduits for other financial frauds including the movement of illicit funds.”

The Cease and Desist Order can be viewed on the Department’s website at finance.idaho.gov

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The Idaho Department of Finance cautions Idaho residents to make sure that the investments and investment professionals with whom they deal are registered.

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) 332-8000 or Idaho toll-free at 1-888-346-3378.



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DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

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