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NEWS RELEASE

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IDAHO INVESTORS MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR RESTITUTION FROM D.H. BLAIR BROKERAGE FIRM

Boise, Idaho . . . Investors in Idaho are eligible for a share of a \$2.25 million restitution fund set up by D.H. Blair & Co., Inc., a New York-based brokerage firm with a lengthy regulatory history, Gavin Gee, Director of the Idaho Department of Finance, announced today. Under an agreement signed by Gee, Idaho customers of D.H. Blair will be contacted by the brokerage firm and told how to file a claim. The Department is also contacting those eligible investors of which it is aware. In order to be eligible for a pro-rata share of the fund, investors must make a complaint based on trades executed between January 1, 1996 and June, 30, 1998 that they believe were somehow inappropriate.

Under the terms of the agreement, the claims will be submitted to an expedited mediation/arbitration process conducted by the regulatory arm of the National Association of Securities Dealers Regulation (NASDR). The settlement with D.H. Blair was reached by a multi-state task force of state securities regulators which had investigated alleged sales practice violations committed by the firm. Gee announced today that the Idaho Department of Finance has signed onto the multi-state agreement. D.H. Blair specialized in the sale of high-risk micro-cap stocks to investors through aggressive cold calling campaigns.

"This settlement will give investors the opportunity to get back at least some of the money they lost because of D.H. Blair's conduct," said Gee. "All too often in cases like this, investors receive nothing, so we think this settlement is positive for the investors involved. The NASDR mediation/arbitration forum should provide investors with the opportunity for a speedy and fair resolution of their claims."

D.H. Blair has a lengthy regulatory history. In August 1997, the firm was censured and fined \$2 million by NASDR. As part of its agreement with the NASDR, the firm agreed to pay restitution to retail customers for alleged markups in connection with several public offerings. In February 1997, D.H. Blair was censured by the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) and fined \$250,000. In April of this year, the firm ceased retail operations. The restitution fund established under the agreement with state securities regulators is unrelated to the NASDR and NYSE actions.

For more information, contact the Department at (208) 332-8004 or toll free within Idaho at 1-888-346-3378.