

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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SENATE BILL 293

Short Title: Deceptive Advertising of Business Location. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Boseman.

Referred to: Judiciary 1 (Civil).

February 22, 2007

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO PROHIBIT BUSINESSES THAT SUPPLY SERVICES OR PRODUCTS
3 FROM MISREPRESENTING THE GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS OF THEIR
4 BUSINESSES IN TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES, DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE
5 DATABASES, AND IN PRINT ADVERTISEMENTS.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 SECTION 1. Article 1 of Chapter 75 of the General Statutes is amended by
8 adding a new section to read:

9 **§ 75-40. Deceptive representation of geographical location in telephone directory**
10 **or in print advertisement.**

11 (a) A person, firm, or corporation that is in the business of supplying a service or
12 a product shall not misrepresent the geographical location of the business in the listing
13 of the business in a telephone directory or other directory assistance database. A person,
14 firm, or corporation misrepresents the geographical location of the business under this
15 subsection if the name of the business indicates that the business is located in a
16 geographical area and all of the following apply:

17 (1) The business is not located within the geographical area indicated.

18 (2) The listing fails to identify the municipality and state of the business's
19 geographical location.

20 (3) A telephone call to the local telephone number listed in the directory
21 or database routinely is forwarded or transferred to a location that is
22 outside the calling area covered by the directory or database in which
23 the number is listed.

24 (b) A person, firm, or corporation that is in the business of supplying a service or
25 a product shall not misrepresent the geographical location of the business in print
26 advertisement. A person, firm, or corporation misrepresents the geographical location of
27 the business under this subsection if a fictitious business name or an assumed business
28 name is listed in print advertisement and all of the following apply:

29 (1) The name misrepresents the geographic location of the supplier.

1 (2) A telephone call to the local telephone number routinely is forwarded
2 or transferred to a location that is outside the calling area in which the
3 number is listed.

4 (c) A person, firm, or corporation who misrepresents the geographical location of
5 the business under subsection (a) or subsection (b) of this section is not in violation of
6 this section if a conspicuous notice in the listing or in the print advertisement states the
7 municipality and state in which the business is located and identifies this as the location
8 of the business.

9 (d) For purposes of this section, a newspaper publisher, magazine or other
10 publication, telephone directory or directory assistance service, its officer or agent, the
11 owner or operator of a radio or television station, or any other owner or operator of a
12 media primarily devoted to listing phone numbers or to advertising who publishes,
13 broadcasts, or otherwise disseminates a directory, a database, or print advertisement in
14 good faith without knowledge of its false, deceptive, or misleading character is immune
15 from liability under this section unless the directory service, the database service, or the
16 advertiser is the same person as the person, firm, or corporation that has committed the
17 act prohibited by this section.

18 (e) A violation of this section is an unfair trade practice under G.S. 75-1.1."

19 **SECTION 2.** This act becomes effective October 1, 2007, and applies to any
20 telephone directory, telephone assistance, or print advertisement provided or published
21 on or after that date.