

Testimony of Linda Lindquist

*Hearing on Aggressive Sales Tactics on the Internet and Their Impact on American Consumers*

November 17, 2009

Good afternoon. My name is Linda Lindquist and I am from Sussex, Wisconsin. In April of 2007, my 19-year-old daughter and I went to temporarily live in Atlanta, Georgia. My daughter had sustained a spinal cord injury in January of 2007 while downhill skiing and was a quadriplegic. She started to get movement back in her legs and both my husband and I felt that she needed to go to a specialty spinal cord facility in order to give her the best possible opportunity for recovery. This would mean that my husband would have to care for our three other children, solo, back in Wisconsin.

One of the best things about being in Atlanta was meeting and socializing with other families in the same situation. One of our favorite things was to go to the movie theater. In July of 2007, I started purchasing tickets from movietickets.com. I remember that at the end of the transaction on the confirmation page was a coupon stating, "Get \$10 off your next purchase", so I clicked on the coupon because it seemed that it was a legitimate offer from movietickets.com and I thought they were a reputable website. The next page needed my personal information. I then decided that I did not have enough time to fill out the form, so I closed out of the website. Approximately two weeks later, I again purchased tickets on movietickets.com. This time, however, I did start to fill out the personal information, but after going to the next page, I realized that this was probably a scam. At no time, did I ever include my credit card information or knowingly agree to any terms and conditions.

After four months of physical rehab, my daughter was beginning to make great improvements and our stay ended up being lengthened by an additional year. We finally returned home in August of 2008. In October of 2008, my husband was paying our bills and asked me to take a look at our credit card statement. There were two charges for \$10.00, one from Reservation Rewards and one from Shoppers Discounts. I did not know what these charges were for but I told my husband that I would look into it. I first called the 800 number that was listed on the credit card statement.

I spoke with a customer service representative who told me that I had signed up for Reservation Rewards and Shoppers Discounts online after a movie ticket purchase on movietickets.com. I told the representative that I had not knowingly signed up for this service and asked how they had gotten my credit card number. She stated that movietickets.com gave them my credit card number. I then asked what service, exactly, I was paying for. She stated that they offer coupons and discounts for restaurants and hotels. I told the representative that I had never gotten any correspondence, either

online or via mail regarding my so-called membership. I then asked her to cancel my membership and also to tell me how much money I had paid to date. She replied that I had paid \$320.00. I was shocked! I asked if she could refund my money since I had no idea that I had even subscribed to this service. She stated that she would cancel my membership and could credit me the last month's payment of \$20.00.

At that time, I didn't think I had any other options as far as getting my money back, but the more I thought about it, the more upset I was with movietickets.com. Here was what I thought was a reputable website, when in reality they were allowing this scam at the end of the purchase. I then went on movietickets.com and sent them an email regarding the money I had lost due to them giving my credit card number to a scam. Approximately 30 days later, I had gotten a correspondence from movietickets.com stating that I would be getting a full refund.

I am a college educated person who is online everyday. I have made hundreds of online purchases over the last ten years. I have seen many scams and offers on the internet and have only been lured in by one, this one, due to the fact that the scam was associated with a reputable website and required just one click. Just last week, in fact, when I purchased the airline ticket for my son to travel to Washington, D C, with me on AirTran Airways, what should appear on their confirmation page, but a "\$20.00 cash back offer from Great Fun". You can bet that I will be sending Airtran an email regarding my disappointment in their choice of an affiliate. Thank you.