



MEDIA RELEASE

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EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE COMPANY DISCOUNTING THE TRUTH TO MAKE SALES?

Consumer Action Law Centre is taking legal action against A.I.M. (Melb) Pty Ltd (now National Dealer Network Pty Ltd) on behalf of Mr Assam Shihata, a disability pensioner from a non-English speaking background, alleging high pressure selling of maths and English software and tutoring services.

Consumer Action solicitor, Jillian Williams, said that Consumer Action had received numerous complaints about the selling practices of A.I.M and other educational software providers. Consumers complain about hard-sell tactics in their homes and signing parents up for loan contracts of several thousand dollars to pay for their software.

"We alleged that in this particular case, the salesperson came to our client's home and did not explain to him that he was entering into a loan contract for almost \$6,000 with Lombard Finance to pay for the software." Ms Williams said.

"Mr Shihata is a disability pensioner with limited English skills and his wife relies on a carer's pension. We are arguing that the company should have known he would not be able to pay the loan without financial hardship."

Ms Williams said that Consumer Action's claim in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal also alleges A.I.M. breached the law by not providing notice about her client's cooling-off rights, which apply to sales made in private homes.

"Mr Shihata says the company told him he would be able to cancel the contract at any time by calling them, but when he tried to cancel about a month later the company ignored him and later insisted on full payment."

"Mr Shihata's children are not even using the software and the company won't refund his money."

"We consider that these companies are taking advantage of vulnerable parents who want to do the best by their children."

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