

## Terms Complete

### ORDER SUMMARY – Case Number: C-17-2229

**Name(s):** HighTechLending, Inc.  
Mr. Don A. Currie, President  
Ms. Erika Macias-White, EVP and COO  
Vena M. Currie, Director of Marketing

---

**Order Number:** C-17-2229-18-CO01

---

**Effective Date:** January 12, 2018

---

**License Number:** HighTechLending, Inc., NMLS 7147  
Don A. Currie, NMLS 7691  
Ms. Erika Macias-White, NMLS 7692  
Vena M. Currie, NMLS 1481327

---

**License Effect:** None.

---

**Not Apply Until:** N/A

---

**Not Eligible Until:** N/A

---

**Prohibition/Ban Until:** N/A

---

<b>Investigation Costs</b>	\$ 10,000	Due: Upon entry	Paid: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Date: 1/12/18
<b>Paid Fine</b>	\$ 50,000	Due: Upon entry	Paid: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Date: 1/12/18
	\$ 50,000	Due: 7/31/2018	Paid: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	Date: 8/1/18
<b>Stayed Fine</b>	\$ 100,000	Stayed for two (2) years contingent upon compliance with terms of the Consent Order.		

**Comments:** Cease and Desist - Respondents shall cease and desist all false, misleading, unfair, or deceptive advertising practices, and shall henceforth comply with the Act and rules adopted thereunder, both now existing and as hereafter amended or enacted.

Compliance Examination - Company is subject to a compliance examination at its cost within one year of entry of CO. If HighTechLending receives a risk rating of 3 or 4, the Department may lift the \$100,000 stayed fine; if it receives a risk rating of 5, the Department will lift the stayed fine.

---

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10

**STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS  
DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES**

IN THE MATTER OF DETERMINING  
Whether there has been a violation of the  
Consumer Loan Act of Washington by:

No. C-17-2229-18-CO01

CONSENT ORDER

HIGHTECHLENDING, INC., NMLS No. 7147, d/b/a  
American Senior, AmericanSenior.com, Golden Heritage  
Financial, and American Mortgage Group;  
DON ANTHONY CURRIE, NMLS No. 7691, Co-Founder  
and Owner, President, and Chairman of the Board;  
ERIKA MACIAS, NMLS No. 7692, Co-Founder and  
Owner, Senior Vice President, and COO; and  
VENA MARIE CURRIE, NMLS No. 1481327, Director of  
Marketing,

Respondents.

11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17

COME NOW the Director of the Department of Financial Institutions (Director), through her designee Charles E. Clark, Division Director, Division of Consumer Services, and HighTechLending, Inc. (Respondent HighTech); Don Anthony Currie (Respondent Don Currie); Erika Macias (Respondent Erika Macias); and Vena Marie Currie (Respondent Vena Currie) (collectively, Respondents), and finding that the issues raised in the above-captioned matter may be economically and efficiently settled, agree to the entry of this Consent Order. This Consent Order is entered pursuant to chapter 31.04 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), and RCW 34.05.060 of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), based on the following:

18  
19

**AGREEMENT AND ORDER**

20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

The Department of Financial Institutions, Division of Consumer Services (Department) and Respondents have agreed upon a basis for resolution of the matters alleged in the attached Statement of Charges No. C-17-2229-17-SC01 (Charges), entered October 5, 2017. Pursuant to chapter 31.04 RCW, the Consumer Loan Act (Act), and RCW 34.05.060 of the APA, Respondents hereby agree to the Department's entry of this Consent Order. The parties intend this Consent Order to fully resolve the Statement of Charges, and agree that the Respondents do not admit any wrongdoing by its entry. Respondents are agreeing not to contest the Charges in consideration of the terms of this Consent Order.

1 **Based upon the foregoing:**

2 **A. Jurisdiction.** It is AGREED that the Department has jurisdiction over the subject matter of the activities  
3 discussed herein.

4 **B. Waiver of Hearing.** It is AGREED that Respondents have been informed of the right to a hearing  
5 before an administrative law judge, and hereby waive their rights to a hearing and any and all administrative and  
6 judicial review of the issues raised in this matter, or of the resolution reached herein.

7 **C. Cease and Desist.** It is AGREED that Respondents have represented and warranted to the Department  
8 that Respondents have ceased and desisted from engaging in the conduct described in the Charges. It is FURTHER  
9 AGREED and ORDERED that Respondents shall cease and desist all false, misleading, unfair, or deceptive  
10 advertising practices, and shall henceforth comply with the Act and rules adopted thereunder, both now existing  
11 and as hereafter amended or enacted.

12 **D. Supervision.** It is AGREED and ORDERED that Respondents shall supervise all employees, branch  
13 managers, and mortgage loan originators to ensure all advertising and marketing materials are reviewed, approved,  
14 and comply with the Act and related rules before dissemination to Washington borrowers. As used herein,  
15 “advertising and marketing materials” includes direct mail and print solicitations, brochures, videos, Respondent’s  
16 Internet websites, and social media marketing, including information posted on Twitter, Facebook, Google+,  
17 LinkedIn, Yelp, Instagram, YouTube, and similar social media websites.

18 **E. Paid Fine.** It is AGREED and ORDERED that Respondents shall pay a fine in the amount of \$200,000,  
19 with \$100,000 of that amount (the Paid Fine) paid pursuant to Paragraph J.

20 **F. Stayed Fine.** It is AGREED that the Department’s two-year stay of payment of the \$100,000 balance  
21 (the Stayed Fine) is expressly premised upon the truthfulness and accuracy of Respondents’ representation that  
22 payment of the \$200,000 agreed fine would severely disrupt Respondents’ ability to continue operations in  
23 Washington. It is FURTHER AGREED and ORDERED that payment of the \$100,000 Stayed Fine shall be stayed  
24 for a period of two years from the date of entry of this Consent Order contingent on Respondents’ future  
25 compliance with the Act, this Consent Order, and a satisfactory compliance examination as detailed in

1 Paragraph G. Absent an action by the Department to lift the stay pursuant to Paragraph H, Respondents' obligation  
2 to pay the Stayed Fine shall expire two years from the date of entry of this Consent Order without further action or  
3 notice by the Department.

4 **G. Compliance Examination.** It is AGREED and ORDERED that the Department will conduct a  
5 compliance examination of Respondent HighTech at Respondents' cost. The scope of the examination will be  
6 limited to Respondents' compliance with the advertising provisions of the Act and related rules; compliance with  
7 the terms of this Consent Order; and compliance with Respondents' advertising practices, policies, and procedures.  
8 The examination will take place in approximately one year from the date of this Consent Order based upon the  
9 availability of the Department's Examinations Unit. It is further AGREED and ORDERED that an examination  
10 rating of 3 or 4 may result in the lifting of the \$100,000 Stayed Fine, and an examination rating of 5 will result in  
11 the lifting of the \$100,000 Stayed Fine.

12 **H. Lifting of Stay.** It is AGREED and ORDERED that:

- 13 1. If during the two-year stay the Department determines Respondents materially misrepresented  
14 their ability to continue operations in Washington, have not complied with the advertising  
15 provisions of the Act and related rules, have not complied with the terms of this Consent Order,  
16 or if Respondent HighTech receives an examination rating of 3, 4, or 5, and the Department seeks  
17 to lift the stay and impose the Stayed Fine, the Department will first serve Respondents with  
18 written notice of alleged noncompliance.
- 19 2. The notice will include:
  - 20 a. A description of the alleged noncompliance;
  - 21 b. A statement that the Department seeks to lift the stay and impose the \$100,000 Stayed Fine;
  - 22 c. Notice that Respondents can contest the notice of alleged noncompliance by either requesting  
23 an adjudicative hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) from the Office of  
24 Administrative Hearings (OAH), or by submitting a written response to the Department  
25 contesting the alleged noncompliance; and
  - d. Notice that the process for lifting the stay applies only to this Consent Order.
3. Respondents have twenty (20) days from the date of service of the notice of alleged  
noncompliance to submit a written request to the Department for an adjudicative hearing or, in  
lieu thereof, a written response contesting the alleged noncompliance.
4. The scope and issues of the adjudicative hearing are limited solely to whether or not Respondents  
are in violation of the advertising provisions of the Act, this Consent Order, or that Respondent  
HighTech received an examination rating of 3, 4, or 5.

//

- 1 5. At the conclusion of the adjudicative hearing the ALJ will issue an initial decision. Either party  
2 may file a Petition for Review of that initial decision with the Director of the Department.
- 3 6. In lieu of requesting an adjudicative hearing, within twenty (20) days from the date of service of  
4 the notice of alleged noncompliance, Respondents may submit a written response for  
5 consideration by the Department contesting the alleged noncompliance. The response must  
6 include each Respondent's waiver of the right to an adjudicative hearing, may address the alleged  
7 noncompliance, and may seek an alternative resolution to lifting the \$100,000 Stayed Fine.
- 8 7. **Default.** If Respondents do not timely request an adjudicative hearing, or timely submit a written  
9 response contesting the notice of alleged noncompliance, the Department may lift the stay and  
10 impose the \$100,000 Stayed Fine without further notice.

11 **I. Investigation Fee.** It is AGREED and ORDERED that upon entry of this Consent Order Respondents  
12 shall pay to the Department an investigation fee of \$10,000.

13 **J. Payments.** It is AGREED and ORDERED that upon entry of this Consent Order Respondents shall  
14 make an initial payment of \$50,000 of the \$100,000 Paid Fine to the Department. This initial payment, plus the  
15 \$10,000 Investigation Fee, shall be paid together in one \$60,000 cashier's check made payable to the "Washington  
16 State Treasurer." It is further AGREED and ORDERED that on or before July 31, 2018, Respondents shall pay the  
17 \$50,000 unpaid balance of the Paid Fine via cashier's check made payable to the "Washington State Treasure."

18 **K. Authority to Execute Order.** It is AGREED that Respondent Don Currie and Respondent Erika Macias  
19 have represented and warranted that they have the authority, right, and full power to execute this Consent Order on  
20 behalf of Respondent HighTech.

21 **L. Non-Compliance with Order.** It is AGREED that Respondents understand that failure to abide by the  
22 terms and conditions of this Consent Order may result in further legal action by the Department, including but not  
23 limited to the lifting of the \$100,000 Stayed Fine. In the event of such legal action, Respondents may be required  
24 to reimburse the Department for its investigation fees, costs, and expenses for investigating and prosecuting  
25 violations of this Consent Order and/or the Act.

**M. Voluntarily Entered.** It is AGREED that Respondents have voluntarily entered into this Consent Order,  
which is effective when signed by the Director's designee.

//

1 **N. Completely Read, Understood, and Agreed.** It is AGREED that Respondents have read this Consent  
2 Order in its entirety and fully understand and agree to all of the same.

3 **RESPONDENTS:**

4 HighTechLending, Inc.

5 By:

6  
7 /s/ \_\_\_\_\_ 1/10/2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
8 Don Anthony Currie Date  
9 Co-Owner and President

10 /s/ \_\_\_\_\_ 1/10/2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
11 Erika Macias Date  
12 Co-Owner and Senior Vice President

13 /s/ \_\_\_\_\_ 1/10/2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
14 Don Anthony Currie Date  
15 Individually

16 /s/ \_\_\_\_\_ 1/10/2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
17 Erika Macias Date  
18 Individually

19 /s/ \_\_\_\_\_ 1/10/2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
20 Vena Marie Currie Date  
21 Individually

22 **DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE**

23 //  
24 //  
25 //

1 THIS ORDER ENTERED THIS 12<sup>th</sup> DAY OF January, 2018.

2  
3 /s/ \_\_\_\_\_  
4 CHARLES E. CLARK  
5 Director, Division of Consumer  
6 Services Department of Financial  
7 Institutions

8 Presented by:

Approved by:

9  
10 /s/ \_\_\_\_\_  
11 ANTHONY W. CARTER  
12 Senior Legal Examiner

13 /s/ \_\_\_\_\_  
14 STEVEN C. SHERMAN  
15 Enforcement Chief

1 **STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
2 **DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**  
3 **DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES**

4 IN THE MATTER OF DETERMINING  
5 Whether there has been a violation of the  
6 Consumer Loan Act of Washington by:

7 **HIGHTECHLENDING, INC.**, NMLS No. 7147, d/b/a  
8 American Senior, AmericanSenior.com, Golden Heritage  
9 Financial, and American Mortgage Group;  
10 **DON ANTHONY CURRIE**, NMLS No. 7691, Co-  
11 Founder and Owner, President, and Chairman of the  
12 Board;  
13 **ERIKA MACIAS**, NMLS No. 7692, Co-Founder and  
14 Owner, Senior Vice President, and COO; and  
15 **VENA MARIE CURRIE**, NMLS No. 1481327, Director  
16 of Marketing,

17 Respondents.

No. C-17-2229-17-SC01

18 **STATEMENT OF CHARGES and NOTICE OF**  
19 **INTENT TO ENTER AN ORDER TO CEASE**  
20 **AND DESIST, IMPOSE FINES, COLLECT**  
21 **INVESTIGATION FEES, and RECOVER**  
22 **COSTS AND EXPENSES OF PROSECUTION**

23 **INTRODUCTION**

24 Pursuant to RCW 31.04.093 and RCW 31.04.165, the Director of the Washington State Department of  
25 Financial Institutions (Director) is responsible for the administration of chapter 31.04 RCW, the Consumer Loan  
Act (Act). Having conducted an investigation pursuant to RCW 31.04.145, and based upon the facts available as  
of the date of this Statement of Charges (Charges), the Director, through her designee, Division of Consumer  
Services Director Charles E. Clark, institutes this proceeding and alleges as follows:

26 **I. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

27 **1.1 Respondents.**

28 **A. Respondent HIGHTECHLENDING, INC.** (Respondent HTL) is a California for-profit corporation  
29 organized on or about July 19, 2006, registered as a foreign corporation in Washington on or about February 23,  
30 2007, and licensed by the Washington State Department of Financial Institutions (Department) to conduct business  
31 in Washington as a consumer loan company on or about October 10, 2008. Respondent HTL currently has eight  
32 Department-licensed branches, including two located in Washington, and conducts business in Washington using  
33 the registered trade names American Senior, AmericanSenior.com, Golden Heritage Financial, and American  
34 Mortgage Group. Respondent HTL renewed its consumer loan license with the Department in February 2017.



1           **B. Respondent Don Anthony Currie** (Respondent Currie), Respondent HTL’s Co-Founder, Co-Owner,  
2 President, and Chairman of the Board, has never been licensed by the Department in any capacity.

3           **C. Respondent Erika Macias** (Respondent Macias), Respondent HTL’s Co-Founder, Co-Owner, Vice  
4 President, and Chief Operations Officer, has never been licensed by the Department in any capacity.

5           **D. Respondent Vena Marie Currie** (Respondent Vena Currie), Respondent HTL’s Director of Marketing  
6 since January 2007, has never been licensed by the Department in any capacity.

7 **1.2 Company Background.** Respondent HTL is a leading Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) reverse  
8 mortgage lender, presently ranked in the top ten of HECM lenders nationally.<sup>1</sup> From 2015 through the end of the  
9 second quarter of 2017, Respondent HTL originated more than 200 HECM loans in Washington valued at more  
10 than \$90 million. Respondent HTL advertises extensively on two retail Internet websites, HighTechLending.com  
11 and, beginning in 2016, AmericanSenior.com. On the retail sites, prospective borrowers can learn about HECM  
12 loans, view or obtain copies of brochures describing Respondent HTL and its HECM loan products, and view or  
13 obtain copies of videos or CDs with similar information. In addition, Respondent HTL advertises extensively using  
14 telemarketing, direct mail, and brochures and videos on its retail Internet websites. Respondent HTL incurred more  
15 than \$11 million in aggregate advertising expenses in the years ended February 28, 2017, and February 29, 2016.

16           Respondent HTL also has a recruiting site, hightechlending.net, focusing largely on Respondent HTL’s  
17 status as a national leader among HECM lenders. On the site, Respondent HTL offers prospective employees  
18 information about the benefits of selling HECM loans, a \$15,000 signing bonus, and access to its HECM  
19 marketing center. Respondent HTL’s video and print marketing materials available on the website contain material  
20 misrepresentations, and omit material facts concerning HECM loans. Respondent HTL and its Washington-  
21 licensed branches use those deceptive materials when marketing HECM loan products in Washington.

22 **1.3 Compliance Examinations.**

23           **A. 2011 Examination.** The Department conducted its first compliance examination of Respondent HTL in  
24 2011, held an exit interview with Respondent Currie and Respondent Macias, and delivered the 2011 Report of

25 \_\_\_\_\_  
<sup>1</sup> HECMWorld: <http://www.hecmworld.com/reverse-mortgage-news/hecm-lenders-top-100-september>

1 Examination (ROE) to Respondent HTL on or about June 2, 2011.

2 The 2011 ROE concluded that Respondent HTL had violated eight provisions of the Act and applicable federal  
3 laws and regulations. Relevant to these Charges, the Department found four advertising violations related to  
4 Respondent HTL's forward mortgage loans:

- 5 • When advertising mortgage payments, omitting that the advertised monthly payments did not include  
6 amounts for taxes and insurance premiums, in violation of RCW 31.04.027(2),  
7 WAC 208-620-550(9), and Regulation Z;
- 8 • When advertising the initial interest rate and monthly payment on variable rate mortgages, omitting the  
9 fully indexed interest rate and mortgage payment, in violation of RCW 31.04.027(7),  
10 WAC 208-620-550(20), and Regulation Z;
- 11 • Misrepresenting on its website that Respondent HTL could get loans "at the best rate and fees," in  
12 violation of RCW 31.04.027(2) and WAC 208-620-630(5); and
- 13 • Omitting on its website a link to the NMLS Consumer Access website, in violation of RCW  
14 31.04.027(2) and WAC 208-620-622(1) and (3).

15 The Department gave Respondent HTL a risk rating of "3," noting that Respondent HTL exhibited  
16 weaknesses "ranging from moderately severe to less than satisfactory," and advising that "[t]he Company  
17 must improve current business practices in order to come into compliance with the Act and applicable federal  
18 rules and regulations." Based in part on the number and severity of the violations, the Department scheduled a  
19 follow-up compliance examination for Respondent HTL in 2012.

20 **B. 2012 Examination.** The Department conducted its second compliance examination of Respondent  
21 HTL in 2012, held an exit interview with Respondent Macias and the Chief Risk Officer, and delivered the 2012  
22 ROE to Respondent HTL on or about December 19, 2012.

23 The 2012 ROE concluded that Respondent HTL had violated fourteen provisions of the Act and applicable  
24 federal laws and regulations, including seven repeat violations relating to forward loan origination. Relevant to  
25 these Charges, the Department found three new advertising violations related to Respondent HTL's advertising of  
forward mortgage loans:

- Advertising using a direct mail solicitation that suggested a government affiliation without also  
including the name of Respondent HTL, in violation of RCW 31.04.027(2) and WAC 208-620-  
630(1)(e), and omitting to clearly and conspicuously disclose Respondent HTL's name and NMLS  
number in violation of RCW 31.04.027(2) and WAC 208-620-622(1)(a);

- When advertising on YouTube, representing that Respondent HTL could provide borrowers with “no costs or fees” loans, in violation of RCW 31.04.027(2), (7), and (12) and WAC 208-620-630(8); and
- When advertising credit terms on its Mortgage Rates table, which included credit terms that triggered additional credit disclosures, omitting the required additional credit terms in violation of RCW 31.04.027(7) and Regulation Z.

The Department again gave Respondent HTL a risk rating of “3,” noting the same weaknesses, and advising that to ensure future compliance, management of Respondent HTL should obtain and maintain knowledge of the Act and implement an adequate system of internal controls. Based in part on the number and severity of the violations, and the repeated risk rating of “3,” the Department scheduled Respondent HTL for a “Supervisory Watch” examination.

**C. 2013 Supervisory Watch Examination.** The Department conducted its first Supervisory Watch Examination (SWE) to verify Respondent HTL’s implementation of the corrective actions noted in the 2011 and 2012 ROEs, held an exit interview with the Chief Risk Officer, and delivered the 2013 SWE report to Respondent HTL on or about September 18, 2013.

The 2013 SWE report concluded that Respondent HTL was continuing to violate provisions of the Act and rules, as well as applicable federal laws and regulations. The SWE report found three repeat violations including, relevant to these Charges, two repeat advertising violations. In addition, the 2013 SWE report found a violation relating to Respondent HTL’s failure to oversee advertising by a Washington-licensed branch. The repeat violations relating to advertising HECM loans included representing that Respondent HTL could provide borrowers with “no costs or fees” and, when advertising credit terms that triggered additional credit disclosures, omitting the required additional credit terms. The Department did not provide a risk rating in the 2013 SWE report, but noted that Respondent HTL had not made an observable improvement in implementing control mechanisms for advertising and had not documented branch training.

Based in part on the number, severity, and repeat violations, the Department scheduled Respondent HTL for another SWE. The Department also required that Respondent Currie and Respondent Macias address the repeat violations and personally sign their response to the 2013 SWE report.

//

1           **D. 2014 Supervisory Watch Examination.** The Department conducted its second SWE in 2014, held an  
2 exit interview with Respondent Macias, the Chief Risk Officer, and the Vice President of the Reverse Mortgage  
3 Division, and delivered the 2014 SWE report to Respondent HTL on or about August 26, 2014.

4           The 2014 SWE report concluded that Respondent HTL was continuing to violate provisions of the Act and  
5 rules, as well as applicable federal laws and regulations. The SWE report found six repeat violations, including that  
6 Respondent HTL was again advertising it could provide borrowers with the best mortgage rates.

7           **1.4 False Advertising.** Respondent HTL, Respondent Currie, Respondent Macias, and Respondent Vena Currie  
8 (Respondents) misrepresented and/or omitted material information about Respondent HTL’s HECM loan products,  
9 particularly misrepresenting the right of borrowers to remain in their homes for life without making monthly  
10 mortgage payments and omitting material information about the risk of default and foreclosure.

11           **A. “Mortgage Solutions for Seniors” Brochure.** Respondent HTL made available to prospective  
12 borrowers a 9-page brochure titled “Mortgage Solutions for Seniors.” Respondents misrepresented material  
13 information about HECM loans in the brochure, including:

- 14           • That borrowers are not obligated to repay a HECM loan for as long as they live in the home;
- 15           • That repayment of the HECM loan is required only at the end of the loan;
- 16           • That consumers can continue to live in and own the home without having to make monthly mortgage  
            payments; and
- Describing the maximum loan amount available on a HECM loan as a “benefit.”

17 Respondents also omitted material information about HECM loans in the brochure by:

- 18           • Repeatedly referencing some of the conditions required to avoid default and foreclosure, while omitting  
            other material required conditions;
- 19           • Representing that the HECM loan is insured by the Federal Government, while omitting that the  
            borrowers must pay the premiums for that insurance; and
- 20           • Omitting to include, in a conspicuous location, a disclaimer that clearly informs borrowers that  
21           Respondent HTL’s “Mortgage Solutions for Seniors” brochure was not from HUD or FHA, and was  
            not approved by HUD, FHA, or any government agency.

22           **B. FAQs About HECM Loans.** Respondent HTL made available to prospective borrowers a list of  
23 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about HECM loans. Respondents omitted to disclose material information  
24 about HECM loans in the FAQs by:

25 //

- 1 • Representing, in a table comparing HECM reverse and forward mortgages, that foreclosure is possible on forward mortgages, while omitting that foreclosure is possible on HECM reverse mortgages;
- 2 • Representing that there is no chance of foreclosure as long as the borrowers “abide by HUD regulations,” while omitting many conditions that could lead to foreclosure; and
- 3 • Omitting to include, in a conspicuous location, a disclaimer that clearly informs borrowers that Respondent HTL’s FAQs are not from HUD or FHA, and was not approved by HUD, FHA, or any
- 4 government agency.

5 **C. “What You Need To Know About Reverse Mortgages” Video.** Respondent HTL made available to  
6 prospective borrowers on its retail websites, on YouTube, and on its Facebook page a short video titled “What You  
7 Need to Know About Reverse Mortgages.” Respondents misrepresented and/or omitted material information about  
8 HECM loans in the video, including that borrowers can continue to live in and own their home for the rest of their  
9 lives without having to make monthly mortgage payments; that the HECM loan is insured by the Federal  
10 Government, while omitting that the borrowers must pay the premiums for that insurance; and omitting to include,  
11 in a conspicuous location, a disclaimer that clearly informs borrowers that Respondent HTL’s video was not from  
12 HUD or FHA, and was not approved by HUD, FHA, or any government agency.

13 **D. Direct Mail Solicitation.** During 2015, and again during 2016, Respondent HTL distributed a direct  
14 mail solicitation (Solicitation) in Washington. The Solicitation, approved by Respondent HTL and used by it since  
15 at least 2012, was designed to generate interest in Respondent HTL’s HECM loan products. Respondent HTL  
16 distributed more than 50,000 of these Solicitations in Washington during 2015 and 2016. Respondents  
17 misrepresented material information in the Solicitation, including:

- 18 • On the outside of the solicitation, the return address indicated the solicitation, a “Payment Reduction  
19 Notification,” was sent from a “Rate Review Department,” and that the solicitation contained  
20 “IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR MORTGAGE LOAN OF RECORD;”
- 21 • On the inside of the solicitation, that the recipient’s “Payment Reduction Status” was “Pending  
22 Review,” had been issued by a “RATE REDUCTION DEPARTMENT” or “RATE REDUCTION  
23 AND HOME EQUITY DEPARTMENT,” and involved an “FHA HECM RATE REDUCTION  
24 PROGRAM” or “FHA RATE REDUCTION AND HOME EQUITY;”
- 25 • On the inside of the solicitation, that the recipient’s “Mortgage Loan of Record” had “been reviewed  
by our rate lock department;”
- On the inside of the solicitation, that the solicitation involved a “Special FHA Program,” and
- On the inside of the solicitation, Respondent HTL described the “Special FHA Program,” its HECM  
loan products, as a “New Government Regulated Benefit.”

//

//

1 Respondents also omitted to clearly and conspicuously disclose material facts in the Solicitation, including:

- 2 • That the Solicitation was in fact a solicitation for a HECM loan sent and offered by Respondent HTL;
- 3 • The name of the source of the recipient's current loan information used in the Solicitation; and
- 4 • The name and/or NMLS number for Respondent HTL.

5 **1.5 Failure to Supervise.** Respondents provided its Washington-licensed branches, branch managers, and  
6 mortgage loan originators with access to, and authorized the use of, advertising templates approved by  
7 Respondents that contained false, deceptive, and misleading claims and omissions about its HECM loan products.  
8 In doing so, Respondents failed to supervise its Washington-licensed branches, branch managers, and mortgage  
9 loan originators.

10 **1.6 On-Going Investigation.** The Department's investigation into the alleged violations of the Act by  
11 Respondents continues to date.

## 12 **II. GROUNDS FOR ENTRY OF ORDER**

13 **2.1 Responsibility and Liability for Violations.** Pursuant to WAC 208-620-378, in addition to ensuring they  
14 each have sufficient understanding of the law to comply with the Act and rules, the Respondents are each  
15 responsible for ensuring their employees have sufficient understanding of the law to comply with the Act and rules.  
16 Furthermore, pursuant to WAC 208-620-372, Respondents are liable for any violations of the Act or rules by their  
17 employees.

18 **2.2 Unfair or Deceptive Practices.** Based on the Factual Allegations set forth above, Respondents are in  
19 apparent violation of RCW 31.04.027(2) and WAC 208-620-550(5) for directly or indirectly engaging in unfair or  
20 deceptive practices.

21 **2.3 False or Deceptive Statements or Representations.** Based on the Factual Allegations set forth above,  
22 Respondents are in apparent violation of RCW 31.04.027(7) and WAC 208-620-550(20) for making, in any  
23 manner, any false or deceptive statement or representation with regard to the conditions for a mortgage loan.

24 **2.4 False, Misleading, or Deceptive Advertisements.** Based on the Factual Allegations set forth above,  
25 Respondents are in apparent violation of RCW 31.04.135 for advertising, in any manner whatsoever, any statement  
or representation with regard to the conditions for the lending of money that is false, misleading, or deceptive.

1 **2.5 Violations of Applicable State and Federal Laws and Regulations.** Based on the Factual Allegations set  
2 forth above, Respondents are in apparent violation of RCW 31.04.027(13) and WAC 208-620-640 for advertising  
3 in violation of applicable federal laws and regulations, including the Truth in Lending Act, the Federal Trade  
4 Commission Act, and the Mortgage Acts and Practices - Advertising (MAP Rule), also known as Regulation N.

5 **2.6 Failure to Supervise.** Based on the Factual Allegations set forth in Section I above, Respondents are in  
6 apparent violation of RCW 31.04.027(2) for failing to supervise their Washington-licensed branches, branch  
7 managers, and mortgage loan originators.

### 8 **III. AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE SANCTIONS**

9 **3.1 Authority to Order Licensee to Cease and Desist.** Pursuant to RCW 31.04.093(5)(a), the Director may  
10 issue an order directing a licensee, its employees, or other person subject to the Act to cease and desist from  
11 conducting business in a manner that is injurious to the public or violates any provision of the Act.

12 **3.2 Authority to Impose Fines.** Pursuant to RCW 31.04.093(4), the Director may impose fines of up to one  
13 hundred dollars per day, per violation, upon licensees and employees for any violation of the Act.

14 **3.3 Authority to Collect Investigation Fees.** Pursuant to RCW 31.04.145(3) and WAC 208-620-590, every  
15 licensee investigated by the Director shall pay for the cost of the investigation calculated at the rate of \$69.01 per  
16 staff hour devoted to the investigation.

17 **3.4 Authority to Recover Costs and Expenses.** Pursuant to RCW 31.04.205(2), the Director may recover the  
18 state's costs and expenses for prosecuting violations of the Act.

### 19 **IV. NOTICE OF INTENT TO ENTER ORDER**

20 Respondents' violations of the provisions of chapter 31.04 RCW and chapter 208-620 WAC, as set forth in  
21 the above Factual Allegations, Grounds for Entry of Order, and Authority to Impose Sanctions, constitute a basis  
22 for the entry of an Order under RCW 31.04.093, RCW 31.04.165, and RCW 31.04.205. Therefore, it is the  
23 Director's intent to ORDER that:

24 **4.1** Respondent HighTechLending, Inc., Respondent Don Anthony Currie, Respondent Erika  
25 Macias, and Respondent Vena Marie Currie cease and desist from engaging in false,  
misleading, unfair, or deceptive marketing and advertising practices.

