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Resort Owner's Coalition Applauds Better Business Bureau of Missouri for Exposing Timeshare Exit Companies' Fraudulent Practices

WASHINGTON, June 7, 2019 – The American Resort Development Association — Resort Owner's Coalition (ARDA-ROC), representing over 1.5 million timeshare owners, recommends that owners read the [full report](#) that the [Better Business Bureau of Eastern & Southwest Missouri & Southern Illinois](#) issued on June 6, 2019, to better understand the unscrupulous and deceptive practices in the timeshare exit industry. The report cites 700 complaints from 46 states and millions of dollars of losses to consumers.

After issuing several consumer warnings over the past two years about the timeshare exit industry, the Missouri BBB released its in-depth study on the dishonest practices of the timeshare exit industry in Springfield, MO and the substantial harm that many of those exit companies are causing consumers. The study revealed that “Consumers across the U.S., many of them senior citizens and many on fixed incomes, are falling victim to timeshare exit companies at an alarming rate.”

“Despite knowing that the consumers were older and in difficult financial situations, the timeshare exit companies examined by the BBB took advantage of them by charging large upfront fees for services they knew they couldn't deliver,” said VP of Regulatory Affairs and General Counsel of ARDA, Robert Clements. “The losses that consumers are suffering because of the misrepresentations and fraud of many of these exit companies is staggering. Most of the 100% money-back guarantees are worthless,” continued Clements.



In its study, the “BBB urges local law enforcement officials, attorney generals’ offices across the U.S., the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Justice Department to investigate and pursue timeshare exit companies that participate in fraudulent activities.” Clements noted that ARDA-ROC and the industry have worked tirelessly to warn consumers about fraud in the exit industry. “With the help of law enforcement, Attorneys General and the Federal Trade Commission, we believe criminal actions in the exit industry can be stopped. ARDA-ROC and the industry are currently working with and will continue to work with these agencies to go after these individuals and companies to protect consumers,” said Clements.

The timeshare industry, which has over nine million owners, and generates over 540,000 jobs and \$10.8 billion in federal, state and local taxes in the U.S., has become a target for unscrupulous individuals and companies. As a result, the industry has committed to better communicating with owners who want to understand safe timeshare exit options, often directly through their developer or property manager, which may be available for exiting their product. This information can be found at www.responsibleexit.com

Among the red flags of exit and resale scams for timeshare owners to be aware of are:

- Calls or emails claiming to have an "interested buyer" for a timeshare;
- Caller claiming to be a representative of ARDA or ARDA-ROC. **Fact:** ARDA and ARDA-ROC only responds to inquiries from owners after an inbound request – there are absolutely no unsolicited calls, emails or communications;
- A company promises to modify, cancel or transfer an owner's timeshare for a large upfront fee;
- A company requests an upfront fee, or the wire transfer of money for a "service," "tax" or other "requirement" for the sale or transfer to be completed;
- If an offer sounds too good to be true, it likely is.



Owners who believe they have been unfairly taken advantage of or defrauded by an exit company should contact their state's Attorney General (ConsumerResources.org), the Attorney General in the state where the business is located, their local BBB office or local law enforcement. For additional help contacting these resources, consumers can contact the ARDA-ROC Consumer Support Team at 1-855-939-1515.

For more information on options for exiting timeshare, visit www.responsibleexit.com and www.ardaroc.org.

The ARDA-Resort Owners' Coalition (ARDA-ROC) is a 501(c)4 non-profit entity funded by over 1.5 million individual timeshare owner's voluntary contributions. ROC is dedicated to preserving, protecting, and enhancing vacation ownership through smart policy and sensible regulation. We advocate for local, state, and federal policies that enable the vacation ownership industry to thrive and provide consumers with an enriched vacation ownership experience. For more information, visit www.ardaroc.org.