

Assembly Bill No. 479

CHAPTER 382

An act to amend Sections 17209.3, 17312, 17314, 17321, 17331, and 17331.2 of the Financial Code, relating to escrow agents.

[Approved by Governor September 16, 2003. Filed with Secretary of State September 17, 2003.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 479, Maldonado. Escrow agents.

Existing law, the Escrow Law, provides for licensing and regulation by the Commissioner of Corporations of persons engaged in business as escrow agents, unless specifically exempted. Existing law requires persons licensed as escrow agents to be members of the Escrow Agents' Fidelity Corporation, which is established as a nonprofit corporation to indemnify its members against loss, subject in certain cases to a deductible, and which is funded by fees and assessments on its members. Existing law requires employees of escrow agents and various other persons to obtain a certificate from the corporation as a condition of employment or compensation.

This bill, prior to licensure by the commissioner, would require an applicant for an escrow agent license to apply for a certificate from the corporation for each proposed shareholder, officer, director, trustee, manager, or employee who is to be compensated by the licensee, and would authorize the commissioner to refuse to issue a license to an applicant that has failed to comply with the corporation's membership requirements. The bill would revise the application requirements for membership in, and certification by, the corporation. The bill would revise the schedule establishing the coverage the corporation is required to provide its members. The bill would revise the annual assessment the corporation bills and collects from its members. The bill would make other related changes. This bill would incorporate additional changes in Section 17209.3 of the Financial Code, contingent upon the prior enactment of AB 1031.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 17209.3 of the Financial Code is amended to read:

17209.3. The commissioner may refuse to issue any license being applied for, and shall refuse to issue any license being applied for if upon



his or her examination and investigation, and after appropriate hearing, he or she finds any of the following:

(a) That the corporation is to be formed for any business other than legitimate escrow agent services, or proposes to use a name that is misleading or in conflict with the name of an existing licensee.

(b) That any incorporator, officer, or director of the applicant has, within the last 10 years, been (1) convicted of or pleaded nolo contendere to a crime, or (2) committed any act involving dishonesty, fraud, or deceit, which crime or act is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a person engaged in business in accordance with the provisions of this division.

(c) That there is no officer or manager possessing a minimum of five years of responsible escrow or joint control experience stationed or to be stationed at the main office of the corporation and that there is no officer, manager or employee possessing a minimum of four years of responsible escrow or joint control experience stationed or to be stationed at each branch.

(d) That the proposed licensee's financial program is unsound.

(e) A false statement of a material fact has been made in the application for license.

(f) The applicant or any officer, director, or incorporator of the applicant has violated any provision of this division or the rules thereunder or any similar regulatory scheme of a foreign jurisdiction.

(g) The applicant has failed to comply with the Fidelity Corporation's membership requirements set forth in subdivision (b) of Section 17312, in subdivision (a) of Section 17320, and in Sections 17331 and 17331.1.

SEC. 1.5. Section 17209.3 of the Financial Code is amended to read:
17209.3. The commissioner may refuse to issue any license being applied for, and shall refuse to issue any license being applied for if upon the commissioner's examination and investigation, and after appropriate hearing, the commissioner finds any of the following:

(a) That the corporation is to be formed for any business other than legitimate escrow agent services, or proposes to use a name that is misleading or in conflict with the name of an existing licensee.

(b) That any incorporator, officer, or director of the applicant has, within the last 10 years, been (1) convicted of or pleaded nolo contendere to a crime, or (2) committed any act involving dishonesty, fraud, or deceit, which crime or act is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a person engaged in business in accordance with the provisions of this division.

(c) That there is no officer or manager possessing a minimum of five years of responsible escrow or joint control experience stationed or to be stationed at the main office of the corporation and that there is no officer,



manager or employee possessing a minimum of four years of responsible escrow or joint control experience stationed or to be stationed at each branch.

(d) That the proposed licensee's financial program is unsound.

(e) A false statement of a material fact has been made in the application for license.

(f) The applicant, any officer, director, general partner, or incorporator of the applicant, or any person owing or controlling, directly or indirectly, 10 percent or more of the outstanding equity securities of the applicant has violated any provision of this division or the rules thereunder or any similar regulatory scheme of the State of California or a foreign jurisdiction.

(g) The applicant has failed to comply with the Fidelity Corporation's membership requirements set forth in subdivision (b) of Section 17312, in subdivision (a) of Section 17320, and in Sections 17331 and 17331.1.

SEC. 2. Section 17312 of the Financial Code is amended to read:

17312. (a) Each person licensed pursuant to this division who is engaged in the business of receiving escrows specified in subdivision (c) and whose escrow business location is located within the State of California shall participate as a member in Fidelity Corporation in accordance with this chapter and rules established by the board of directors of Fidelity Corporation. Fidelity Corporation shall not deny membership to any escrow agent holding a valid unrevoked license under the Escrow Law who is required to be a member under this subdivision.

(b) Upon filing a new application for licensure as required by Section 17201, persons required to be a member of Fidelity Corporation shall file a copy thereof concurrently with Fidelity Corporation. If an application for licensure submitted to Fidelity Corporation contains personal or confidential information, Fidelity Corporation and its board shall maintain this information in confidence to protect the privacy of the information. The copy of the application shall include the three thousand dollar (\$3,000) fee specified in subdivision (a) of Section 17320 and all required Fidelity Corporation Certificates set forth in Sections 17331 and 17331.1. Fidelity Corporation shall promptly furnish to the commissioner a compliance letter confirming that the applicant has satisfied the requirements to be a member of Fidelity Corporation.

(c) The required membership in Fidelity Corporation shall be limited to those licensees whose escrow business location is located within the State of California and who engage, in whole or in part, in the business of receiving escrows for deposit or delivery in the following types of transactions:



(1) Real property escrows, including, but not limited to, the sale, encumbrance, lease, exchange, or transfer of title, and loans or other obligations to be secured by a lien upon real property.

(2) Bulk sale escrows, including, but not limited to, the sale or transfer of title to a business entity and the transfer of liquor licenses or other types of business licenses or permits.

(3) Fund or joint control escrows, including, but not limited to, transactions specified in Section 17005.1, and contracts specified in Section 10263 of the Public Contract Code.

(4) The sale, transfer of title, or refinance escrows for manufactured homes or mobilehomes.

(5) Reservation deposits required under Article 2 (commencing with Section 11010) of Chapter 1 of Part 2 of Division 4 of the Business and Professions Code or by regulation of the Department of Real Estate to be held in an escrow account.

(6) Escrows for sale, transfer, modification, assignment, or hypothecation of promissory notes secured by deeds of trust.

(d) Coverage required to be provided by Fidelity Corporation under this chapter shall be provided to members only for loss of trust obligations with respect to those types of transactions specified in subdivision (c). Indemnity coverage for those types of transactions not specified in subdivision (c) shall be provided by escrow agents in accordance with Section 17203.1.

SEC. 3. Section 17314 of the Financial Code is amended to read:

17314. (a) Fidelity Corporation shall pay a member for loss of trust obligations subject to the limitations set forth in this chapter. Fidelity Corporation shall pay or deny the claim within 90 days of receipt of the proof of loss filed by a member, or a member's successor in interest. Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, the protection to members provided by Fidelity Corporation and by the fidelity bond or insurance policy, if any, shall not extend to any transaction involving any member at any branch or business location outside the State of California, but shall extend only to escrow trust obligations and trust funds located within the State of California.

(b) Coverage shall be provided to members in accordance with the following schedule:



MONTHLY AVERAGE ESCROW LIABILITY PER LOCATION	COVERAGE
\$0 – \$ 1,000,000	\$1,000,000
over \$1,000,000 – \$ 3,000,000	\$2,000,000
over \$3,000,000 – \$ 5,000,000	\$3,000,000
over \$5,000,000 – \$ 7,500,000	\$4,000,000
over \$7,500,000 – \$10,000,000	\$5,000,000

Pursuant to the schedule, the minimum coverage by Fidelity Corporation for each licensed location shall be one million dollars (\$1,000,000) and the maximum coverage for each licensed location shall be five million dollars (\$5,000,000).

(c) A member shall maintain minimum coverage in accordance with the schedule in subdivision (b) and shall monitor its escrow liability monthly. An increase in escrow liability above the monthly average escrow liability coverage as provided for in subdivision (b) shall be reported immediately to Fidelity Corporation. Upon receipt of this report, Fidelity Corporation shall immediately provide for the increase in coverage, and shall immediately bill and collect pursuant to Section 17321, an amount necessary to provide for the increased coverage.

(d) Any member with a licensed location or locations with a monthly average escrow liability greater than ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) shall obtain a bond from a corporate surety which is an admitted insurer in the State of California insuring the balance of trust funds not covered by Fidelity Corporation, in a ratio of one dollar of coverage for every three dollars of trust obligations not covered by Fidelity Corporation. The Fidelity Corporation shall have the authority to obtain the excess coverage bond. The cost of the bond shall be shared pro rata by those members included in the coverage.

(e) If a member establishes, to the satisfaction of the commissioner, that a bond is not available or is impracticable under subdivision (d), then, at the member’s election, either:

(1) The member shall place average trust obligations in excess of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in a restricted escrow trust account. Each transfer or release of the funds to be made by specific resolution of the member’s board of directors and the signature of a neutral third party and written approval of Fidelity Corporation; or

(2) The licensed location of the member with average trust balances in excess of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) shall be subject to examinations to be conducted at a frequency as deemed appropriate and necessary by the commissioner or Fidelity Corporation, but not less frequently than once a year.



(f) Any member subject to subdivision (e) shall within 10 business days after the effective date of this section notify Fidelity Corporation of its election. A member who subsequently becomes subject to subdivision (e) shall within a like period of time notify Fidelity Corporation of its election. Fidelity Corporation shall also be notified of any change of election in a like period of time. Fidelity Corporation shall notify the commissioner within 10 business days of receipt of any notice under this subdivision of the elections made. All notices under this subdivision shall be in writing.

SEC. 4. Section 17321 of the Financial Code is amended to read:

17321. Fidelity Corporation shall bill and collect from each member an annual premium that in the aggregate shall consist of assessments for the operations fund and the fidelity fund.

(a) The annual assessment for the operations fund shall be assessed no later than October 15 of each year for the current fiscal year in accordance with subdivision (b) of Section 17320. The payment of any invoice for assessments under this subdivision is payable by the member escrow agent in three equal and consecutive monthly installments with the first installment payable at or within 30 days after receipt of the Fidelity Corporation invoice. The assessment shall include:

(1) All costs and expenses of administration as budgeted by the board of directors for the current fiscal year.

(2) Any expenses actually incurred in the preceding fiscal year which exceeded the budgeted costs of expenses and administration except for expenses recovered pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 17321.1.

Each member's assessment shall be determined pro rata based upon the ratio of each member's licensed locations to the total licensed locations of all members as of the preceding June 30.

Members licensed on or after July 1 of each year shall be assessed only for costs and expenses pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subdivision. This assessment shall be prorated on a monthly basis.

(b) The annual assessment for the fidelity fund shall be assessed no later than May 1. The assessment shall include any amount necessary to replenish the membership fund pursuant to Section 17234, and shall be based upon the balances of the membership fund and the fidelity fund as of December 31 of the previous year and the escrow liability schedule of each licensed location as provided in Section 17348, and shall be calculated as follows:

(1) If the membership fund and fidelity fund in the aggregate equal an amount less than five million dollars (\$5,000,000), or if the balance in the fidelity fund is less than two million five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000), then the assessment shall be the greater of: (A) the amount necessary to bring the membership fund and fidelity fund in the



aggregate up to five million dollars (\$5,000,000), but not to exceed one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per assessment, or (B) the amount necessary to maintain a minimum fidelity fund balance of two million five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000), including the amount of the assessment, or (C) four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000).

(2) If the membership fund and fidelity fund in the aggregate equal an amount that is at least five million dollars (\$5,000,000), and the balance in the fidelity fund is at least two million five hundred thousand dollars (\$2,500,000), then the assessment shall be four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000).

Each member’s fidelity fund assessment for paragraphs (1) and (2) shall be the amount derived by multiplying the amount to be assessed by the ratio that each member’s risk factors bear to the total of all members’ risk factors.

A member’s risk factors shall be computed in accordance with the following formula, except that the total factors of a member shall be reduced by one for each licensed branch location:

Coverage per Licensed Location	Factors
\$1,000,000	3
\$2,000,000	5
\$3,000,000	7
\$4,000,000	8
\$5,000,000	9

(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (b), the assessment for the fidelity fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1989, shall be made immediately upon 90-day notice of cancellation of the fidelity bond or insurance policy permitted by paragraph (2) of subdivision (c) of Section 17310, but in no event later than 60 days prior to the date of cancellation.

(d) Every licensed member as of March 31 shall pay the fidelity fund assessment, without any pro rata adjustment, notwithstanding that the member may have surrendered a license or have a license revoked prior to the date that the assessment is mailed.

SEC. 5. Section 17331 of the Financial Code is amended to read:

17331. (a) An applicant applying for licensure as an escrow agent under this division is required to apply for a Fidelity Corporation Certificate, prepared and issued by Fidelity Corporation, for each proposed shareholder, officer, director, trustee, manager, or employee who is to be directly or indirectly compensated by the escrow agent, prior to licensure of the escrow agent by the commissioner.



(b) Within 30 days following written notice by Fidelity Corporation to an escrow agent a shareholder, officer, director, trustee, manager, or employee of an escrow agent, directly or indirectly compensated by an escrow agent within this state, is required to apply for a Fidelity Corporation Certificate, prepared and issued by Fidelity Corporation, as a condition of his or her employment or entitlement to compensation, before the person may continue the regular discharge of his or her duties, or have access to moneys or negotiable securities belonging to or in the possession of the escrow agent, or draw checks upon the escrow agent or the trust funds of the escrow agent.

(c) Fidelity Corporation Certificates may also be known as Escrow Agent's Fidelity Corporation Certificates or EAFC Certificates. The certificate at all times remains the property of Fidelity Corporation, and is not transferable by either a member or employee. The certificate is not a warranty or guarantee by Fidelity Corporation of the integrity, veracity, or competence of the person.

(d) An application for a Fidelity Corporation Certificate shall be in writing and in the form prescribed by Fidelity Corporation. The application may include (1) a fee not to exceed fifty dollars (\$50), (2) two passport-size photographs, and (3) a set of fingerprints on the form established by the Department of Justice for requesting state summary criminal history information, plus the fee charged by the Department of Justice for processing noncriminal applicant fingerprints. The Department of Justice shall honor the Fidelity Corporation report request form and issue a report to Fidelity Corporation, notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation to the contrary. Fidelity Corporation is also entitled to submit a set of fingerprints on the specified noncriminal applicant fingerprint form for the purpose of requesting and obtaining a report from the Department of Justice, for the officers and employees of Fidelity Corporation. A member shall cause the filing of applications for all existing employees as required by this section within 30 days of written notice by Fidelity Corporation to the member.

(e) The application form shall include a provision for binding arbitration to allow for arbitration of any appeal or dispute as to a decision by Fidelity Corporation concerning the certificate, as follows:

A DISPUTE AS TO WHETHER THE DENIAL OF THIS CERTIFICATE APPLICATION OR ANY SUBSEQUENT SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF THE CERTIFICATE IS UNNECESSARY OR UNAUTHORIZED OR WAS IMPROPERLY, NEGLIGENTLY, OR UNLAWFULLY RENDERED, MAY BE DETERMINED BY SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION AS



PROVIDED BY CALIFORNIA LAW, AND NOT BY A LAWSUIT OR RESORT TO COURT PROCESS EXCEPT AS CALIFORNIA LAW PROVIDES FOR JUDICIAL REVIEW OF ARBITRATION PROCEEDINGS OR EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BY SECTION 17331.3 OF THE FINANCIAL CODE. THE APPLICANT MAY, SUBJECT TO AGREEMENT, SUBMIT ANY ISSUE ARISING FROM A DECISION BY FIDELITY CORPORATION TO DENY THIS CERTIFICATE APPLICATION OR TO SUSPEND OR REVOKE THE CERTIFICATE TO BE DECIDED BY BINDING NEUTRAL ARBITRATION. UPON AN AGREEMENT TO SUBMIT TO BINDING NEUTRAL ARBITRATION, THE APPLICANT HAS NO RIGHT TO HAVE ANY DISPUTE CONCERNING THIS CERTIFICATE APPLICATION LITIGATED IN A COURT OR JURY TRIAL NOR ANY JUDICIAL RIGHTS TO DISCOVERY AND APPEAL, EXCEPT AS SPECIFICALLY PROVIDED IN THE ESCROW LAW. ARBITRATION MAY BE COMPELLED AS PROVIDED BY LAW.

(f) There is no liability on the part of and no cause of action of any nature may arise against Fidelity Corporation or its members, directors, officers, employees, or agents, the State of California, the Department of Corporations, or any officer, agent, or employee of the state or the Department of Corporations for statements made by Fidelity Corporation in reports or recommendations made pursuant to this division, or for reports or recommendations made pursuant to this division to Fidelity Corporation by its members, directors, officers, employees or agents, the State of California, the Department of Corporations, or any officer, agent, or employee of the state or the Department of Corporations, unless the information provided is false and the party making the statement or providing the false information does so with knowledge and malice. Reports or recommendations made pursuant to this section, or Section 17331.1, 17331.2, or 17331.3 are not public documents.

(g) There is no liability on the part of and no cause of action of any nature may arise against Fidelity Corporation or its members, directors, officers, employees, or agents, the State of California, the Department of Corporations, or an officer, agent, or employee of the state or the Department of Corporations for the release of any information furnished to Fidelity Corporation pursuant to this section unless the information released is false and the party, including Fidelity Corporation, its members, directors, officers, employees, or agents, the state, the Department of Corporations, or any officer, agent, or employee of the



state or the Department of Corporations, who releases the false information does so with knowledge and malice.

(h) There is no liability on the part of and no cause of action of any nature may arise against Fidelity Corporation or its directors, officers, employees, or agents, for any decision to deny an application for a certificate or to suspend or revoke the certificate of any person or for the timing of any decision or the timing of any notice to persons or members thereof, or for any failure to deny an application under subdivision (a) of Section 17331.2. This subdivision does not apply to acts performed in bad faith or with malice.

(i) Fidelity Corporation, any member of Fidelity Corporation, an agent of Fidelity Corporation or of its members, or any person who uses any information obtained under this section for any purpose not authorized by this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(j) Section 17331, 17331.1, or 17331.2 does not constitute a restriction or limitation upon the obligation of Fidelity Corporation to indemnify members against loss, as provided in Sections 17310 and 17314. The failure to obtain a certificate, the denial of an application for a certificate, or the suspension, cancellation, or revocation of a certificate does not limit the obligation of Fidelity Corporation to indemnify a member against loss.

(k) As of January 1, 1992, notwithstanding Section 11105 of the Penal Code, Fidelity Corporation is entitled to receive state summary criminal history information and subsequent arrest notification from the Department of Justice as a result of fingerprint cards submitted to the Department of Justice by the Department of Corporations, pursuant to subdivision (g) of Section 17209, Section 17212.1, and subdivision (d) of Section 17414.1, by or on behalf of escrow agents, shareholders, officers, directors, trustees, managers, or employees of an escrow agent, directly or indirectly compensated by an escrow agent. The Department of Justice and Fidelity Corporation shall enter into an agreement to implement this subdivision. The Department of Corporations shall forward to Fidelity Corporation, weekly, a list of names of individual fingerprints submitted to the Department of Justice.

SEC. 6. Section 17331.2 of the Financial Code is amended to read:

17331.2. (a) Fidelity Corporation shall deny the application for a certificate or revoke the certificate of any person, upon any of the following grounds:

(1) The application contains a material misrepresentation of fact or fails to disclose a material fact so as to render the application false or misleading, or if any fact or condition exists which, if it had existed at the time of the original application for a certificate, reasonably would



have warranted Fidelity Corporation to refuse originally to issue that certificate.

(2) That the person has been convicted of, or pleaded nolo contendere to, a crime or offense, whether a felony, an offense punishable as a felony, or a misdemeanor, which involved dishonesty, fraud, deceit, embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, misappropriation of property, or any other crime reasonably related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a person engaged in business in accordance with this division. If, however, the conviction is more than 10 years old, or the conviction has been expunged, or the person has obtained a certificate of rehabilitation, as allowed by the Penal Code, or if the conviction was an infraction, then the person may have a Fidelity Corporation certificate upon showing by clear and convincing proof to a reasonable certainty that the conviction is no longer reasonably related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a person engaged in business in accordance with this division or that person's employment with a member.

(3) That the person has been held liable in a civil action by final judgment of any court if the judgment involved dishonesty, fraud, deceit, embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, or misappropriation of property or the person has been ordered to make restitution to a victim in any criminal case involving a crime or offense set forth in paragraph (2). The person may have a Fidelity Corporation certificate upon showing by clear and convincing proof to a reasonable certainty that the judgment or restitution order is no longer reasonably related to the qualifications, functions, or duties of a person engaged in business in accordance with this division or that person's employment with a member.

(4) That the person has (A) committed or caused to be committed an act which caused any member to suffer a loss; (B) committed or caused to be committed or colluded with any other person committing any act which caused a loss, for which Fidelity Corporation or the insurer on any insurance policy or fidelity bond purchased by Fidelity Corporation, or both, to become liable to indemnify any member; or (C) committed or caused to be committed an act of dishonesty, fraud, deceit, embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, or misappropriation of property, to the material damage of a member or for which the member has been held liable to any third party, by final judgment.

(5) That the person has been barred from employment by final order of the commissioner pursuant to Section 17423.

(6) That the person has been deemed not qualified to serve in any capacity as a director or officer or in any other position involving management duties with a financial institution, pursuant to Division 1.8 (commencing with Section 4990).



(7) That the person has been denied coverage or reinstatement by any insurer under any fidelity bond or crime policy, unless a decision of reinstatement of coverage has been made after that denial. A person who obtained a decision of reinstatement of coverage prior to the effective date of this section may have a Fidelity Corporation certificate notwithstanding paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subdivision, unless any other ground for denial or revocation applies to that person.

(b) Fidelity Corporation may suspend the certificate of any person upon any of the following grounds:

(1) That the person has been censured or suspended from any position of employment or management or control of any escrow agent, by final order of the commissioner. The certificate suspension shall be for a term concurrent with the final order of the commissioner.

(2) That there is an action commenced by the commissioner to either suspend or bar that person, under Section 17423.

(3) That the person has been barred from any position of employment or management or control of any escrow agent, for a term less than permanent, by final order of the commissioner. The certificate suspension shall be for a term concurrent with the final order of the commissioner.

(4) That any member with whom the person was employed has given a proof of loss or a notice of an occurrence which may give rise to a claim for a loss of trust obligations either of which identifies the person as the person responsible for the loss or as a person acting in collusion with the person causing the loss.

(c) Upon denial of an application for, or upon suspension or revocation of the certificate of any person, Fidelity Corporation shall provide written notice to the member with whom that person is employed of the decision, pending any appeal therefrom which might be made. Thereafter, the member shall not allow that person to have access to money or negotiable instruments or securities belonging to or in the possession of the escrow agent, or to draw checks upon the escrow agent or the trust accounts of the escrow agent. Fidelity Corporation shall notify the person in writing of the decision to deny, suspend, or revoke the certificate and of the person's right of appeal, together with the notice of appeal. The grounds and basis for the decision shall be stated in the notice thereof. All notices may be served either personally or by mail, properly addressed to the address of record for the member and the person.

(d) Any person whose application for a certificate has been denied, or whose certificate has been suspended or revoked, may appeal the decision, as provided in Section 17331.3. While that appeal is pending, the person may not have access to money or negotiable instruments or



securities belonging to or in the possession of the escrow agent, or to draw checks upon the escrow agent or the trust accounts of the escrow agent. Failure to remove the person whose application has been denied, or whose certificate has been suspended or revoked, as a signer on the trust accounts may be subject to action by the commissioner as provided for in this division and shall be subject to penalties as set forth in Section 17331.1.

(e) Upon expiration of the time for an appeal, or upon conclusion of the appeal, the decision to deny an application for or to suspend or revoke the certificate of any person shall become final. Fidelity Corporation shall give written notice to the member and to the person of the final decision within 10 days. Thereafter, Fidelity Corporation shall disclose in writing to all members the identity of persons whose application has been denied or whose certificate has been revoked.

SEC. 7. Section 1.5 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 17209.3 of the Financial Code proposed by both this bill and AB 1031. It shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2004, (2) each bill amends Section 17209.3 of the Financial Code, and (3) this bill is enacted after AB 1031, in which case Section 1 of this bill shall not become operative.

