

## CHAPTER 196

**AN ACT** concerning escrow agent evaluation services and supplementing P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-1 et seq.).

**BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

C.56:8-200 Escrow agent evaluation services, charging certain fees prohibited.

1. a. It shall be an unlawful practice for any person or entity to prepare a report for use by a mortgage lender in evaluating the capacity of an escrow agent to perform real estate settlement services, in exchange for a fee charged to that escrow agent.

b. As used in this section, "escrow agent" means an independent person, including an independent bonded escrow company, an independent financial institution whose accounts are insured by a governmental agency or instrumentality, an independent licensed title insurance agent, or an attorney licensed to practice law in this State, who is responsible for the receipt of any written instrument, money, evidence of title to real or personal property, or other thing of value to be held until the happening of a specified event or the performance of a prescribed condition, when it is then to be delivered in connection with the transfer of real estate.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 11, 2016.