



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **STATE FINANCE DEPARTMENT ORDERS PROMOTERS OF PHONY CREDIT UNION SCAM TO CEASE AND DESIST**

#### **Department Warns Against "Phishing"**

Boise, Idaho - Gavin Gee, Director of the Idaho Department of Finance, today announced that the Department has issued a Cease and Desist Order against individuals fraudulently using the name "Credit Union 1" to solicit personal consumer information.

The individuals sent e-mail messages to the Department, apparently unaware that the Department supervises credit unions in Idaho, requesting personal identifying information, including the recipient's name, address and date of birth. An investigation by the Department showed that the e-mails were in no way connected with legitimate credit unions having that name in Alaska, Illinois and Kansas. The e-mail messages stated that the purpose of seeking the information was to help the government fight the funding of terrorism and money laundering activities.

Gee stated: "The name 'Credit Union 1' is being used by these persons to perpetrate a fraud upon Idaho consumers. Although Credit Union 1 is a name used by legitimate credit unions in other states, those credit unions do not do business in Idaho and are in no way connected to this fraud. The e-mails are apparently an attempt to obtain personal information for illegal purposes."

Gee warned consumers to not respond to these types of e-mail requests, called "phishing," in which fraudsters send legitimate-looking e-mails to unsuspecting

customers, typically asking for personal information. The e-mails may copy the logos of genuine financial institutions and otherwise look very real. “No legitimate financial institution would contact its customers in this way to obtain personal information,” said Gee. “Do not respond to these e-mails, do not click on links in the message, and do not open attachments.”

The enforcement action brought by the Department orders the individuals to cease and desist from falsely representing themselves to be a legitimate credit union for the purpose of obtaining money, goods or services from Idaho residents. This is the first action brought under the Idaho Financial Fraud Prevention Act, which went into effect last July 1. That law was passed to give the Department greater authority to investigate and bring enforcement actions against those who perpetrate fraud, including phishing, against financial institutions and their customers.

Anyone who questions the authenticity of a company or individual who seeks personal information or claims to be a financial institution should contact the Department of Finance at 208-332-8000, or toll-free in Idaho at 1-888-346-3378.

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*Department of Finance Press Releases and other information can be found on the Internet via the worldwide web at <http://finance.idaho.gov> or may be obtained by contacting the Department at (208) 332-8080 or Idaho toll-free at 1-888-346-3378.*