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**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Cease-and-Desist Order Issued Against RONGISTRVAUTOSALES.COM & Associated Parties for Perpetuating a Fake Business Scam**

**Boise, Idaho...** The Idaho Department of Finance (IDOF) is announcing the issuance of a Cease-and-Desist Order against RONGISTRVAUTOSALES.COM; AUTO SALES GROUP, LLC; AAAEQUPLAG, LLC; LARRY GIBBS; DARIUS PETRONIS; and associated parties outlined in the order (collectively referred to as RONGISTRVAUTOSALES.COM) for orchestrating a fake RV online sales business resulting in multiple violations of the Idaho Financial Fraud Prevention Act.

IDOF began an investigation of RONGISTRVAUTOSALES.COM upon receiving a report from an Idaho-chartered financial institution (Idaho FI) about an attempted fraud against one of its account holders. The account holder had been instructed to wire approximately \$27,400 to secure the purchase of an RV advertised on Craigslist, originating from RONGISTRVAUTOSALES.COM, a website later to be determined as the online presence of a fake business. Due to prompt action by the Idaho FI, the wire was flagged as suspicious and canceled, resulting in no financial loss to the account holder.

Subsequent investigation determined that the perpetrators of this scam used the identity and address of a once legitimate Ohio-based business to fabricate a fake business identity, going so far as to include images of bogus employees on its website to mislead unsuspecting consumers. IDOF issued a cease-and-desist order on December 21, 2023, concluding RONGISTRVAUTOSALES.COM and associated parties violated the Idaho Financial Fraud Prevention Act, which in part prohibits any person from attempting to obtain money, funds, credits, and assets...owned by or under the custody or control of a financial institution through the use of any fraudulent device, scheme, artifice, or fraudulent monetary instrument. The order is posted on IDOF's website under the Administrative Actions tab here <https://www.finance.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/legal/administrative-actions/financial-institutions/documents/2023-Rongistrvautosales.pdf>.

IDOF urges consumers to avoid sending deposits or payments for online purchases via wire or money transfers, as this is a popular request from bad actors who can receive wired funds quickly from anywhere in the world. Additional information about how to identify and avoid online purchase scams can be found in a previous press release issued by IDOF on December 7, 2023, at <https://www.finance.idaho.gov/pressrelease/beware-of-online-purchase-scams/>

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*Consumers can obtain information about financial firms, professionals or products, as well as view more Department press releases and other information on the Internet at <http://finance.idaho.gov> or by contacting the Department at (208) 332-8000 or Idaho toll-free at 1-888-346-3378.*