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CONTACT: Sara Rabern (605) 773-3215

Attorney General Jackley Warns of Unauthorized Websites that Falsely Represent Governmental Agencies

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley is warning South Dakotans to be cautious of misleading websites that falsely appear to be representing governmental agencies.

"Scammers are sending emails and links to South Dakotans that appear to be from South Dakota governmental agencies. These links then reroute you to a fraudulent site that steals your information," said Jackley. "Please retype website addresses into your internet browser rather than clicking on the links sent to you."

The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division has received numerous complaints from businesses in and out of South Dakota who have received emails and/or links to what appears to be from legitimate South Dakota governmental agencies. Typically the link or website contains a slightly different spelling from the legitimate site, for example, including an additional letter at the end of the URL. One slight change to the web address will reroute you to a fraudulent site instantly, while being very difficult to detect.

Attorney General Jackley offers the following tips:

- Type website addresses into your internet browser rather than clicking on a link in an email.

- Be cautious of emails from governmental agencies. If you are not sure whether you are on the correct website of a government agency, call the agency on the phone to verify.

- Check to see that the website has a "lock" icon in the browser before you enter any personal or business information on a website –whether it is a governmental agency or a private business. Clicking on the lock icon will confirm that you are on the website you think you are and will indicate that personal information you provide on the website is protected.

If you believe you have been a victim of this scam, please contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-300-1986 or at consumerhelp@state.sd.us.

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