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## Attorney General Jackley Warns of Grandparent Scam

**PIERRE, S.D.** – Attorney General Marty Jackley's Consumer Protection Division confirms that the grandparents scam is targeting seniors this holiday season.

"As your Attorney General, I continue to make this plea to talk with seniors you know and care about to discuss this scam," said Jackley. "This is a scam of opportunity and the holiday season is the perfect opportunity to play on victim's emotions."

The scam begins with a telephone call from someone claiming to be a grandchild or other family member and requests money for a critical situation such as legal proceedings, theft of their personal belongings or medical conditions. Scammers are targeting their victims using personal information from the internet and social media sites.

The Consumer Protection Division has received numerous calls from consumers who have received the grandparent call. The Consumer Protection Division has a victim that lost \$40,000.00 over a three (3) day span. The scammers told the victim how to package the cash, right down to how tall the stacks of money should be, how to wrap them in newspapers, and how to place them in the shipping box. This scam worked very well for the scammers as it was not out of the norm that this victim would be sending boxes during the holidays.

Another example includes a scammer keeping a senior on the line for over three hours, while instructing her to go to different stores to purchase Google Play cards and then having the victim provide the numbers off the back of the card immediately when she left the store.

Tips to avoid becoming a victim:

- Ask several personal questions including something that only a grandchild would be able to answer like a nickname, name of a family pet or special family tradition. This will help determine if this is a fraud or not.
- Independently contact the grandchild or parent of the grandchild the scam artist is claiming to be at a known phone number.

- Do not fill in the blanks for the caller. If the caller says, "This is your granddaughter," ask "which one?" or "where are you calling from?" The caller is looking for answers that will assist them in the scam.
- Be cautious if the caller asks you to not tell anyone else, like the parents, because he or she will get in trouble. It is all part of the scam.

If you've been victimized by this scam by sending money, please contact the Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-300-1986 or by email at <a href="mailto:consumerhelp@state.sd.us">consumerhelp@state.sd.us</a>.

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