

# NEWS FROM SCDCA

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



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January 28, 2008

Release #08-008

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS ISSUES CRITICAL WARNING REGARDING TAX REBATE SCAM

**Columbia, SC.....**President Bush's recent economic stimulus package worth roughly \$150 billion or one percent of the gross domestic product in the country hopes to stop a nationwide slump. The president continues to express confidence in an economic rebound, but says he hopes the proposal will increase consumer spending. The proposed package translates into one-time tax rebates of up to \$800 for individuals and \$1,600 for married couples. Although it is not been signed into law yet, the proposal has many consumers excited about a few extra dollars this tax season. Sadly, consumers are not the only ones trying to capitalize on the additional cash flow. Scammers are using the president's proposal to dupe consumers out of their rebate before the measure even passes.

Since the proposal was presented to Congress on Friday, January 18, 2008, the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs has received multiple reports of a tax rebate scam. A scammer calls a consumer and requests personal information in order to automatically deposit the consumer's additional rebate under President Bush's economic stimulus package. Consumers are asked for a bank account number in order to deposit the money directly into their account.

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About the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs:

Established by the Consumer Protection code in 1974, The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs represents the interests of South Carolina Consumers.

Our mission is to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, mediation, enforcement and education.

For more information, visit [www.sccoconsumer.gov](http://www.sccoconsumer.gov).

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The White House proposal, however, is just that – a proposal.

- The tax relief measure has not been passed.
- The rebates have not been issued.
- An agency has not been commissioned to collect information so automatic deposits can be processed.
- Even when the tax relief proposal is passed, consumers will not be contacted and asked for sensitive information.
- The IRS or Social Security Administration will not ask for your social security number or bank account. They already have that information.

Any consumer being asked for personal or financial information in order to receive this additional rebate can assume it is a fraudulent call. Consumers may call the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs to report incidents of fraud. If you have already fallen prey to this scheme and given out your bank account number over the phone, please call your bank immediately!

For more information, contact the Public Information Division at 803.734.4190, toll free in SC at 1.800.922.1594, or online at [www.sconsumer.gov](http://www.sconsumer.gov).

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