



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senator Fuschillo Announces New Laws to Safeguard Consumers

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. August 14, 2012

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New Laws Authored by Senator Fuschillo Will Prevent Prison Inmates from Accessing Consumers' Private Information & Prohibit Pay Per Call Prize Schemes

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) today announced that legislation he sponsored to safeguard consumers has been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo. The new laws will prohibit prison inmates from having access to consumers' private information and prohibit pay per call prize schemes in New York State.

"I applaud Governor Cuomo for signing this legislation and working with us to protect consumers. Prison inmates have no right to the access of an individual's social security number. Consumers should also not be preyed upon by scam artists that swindle them into paying exorbitant fees. These new laws will help prevent residents from being victimized by scam artists and criminals," said Senator Fuschillo.

The first law authored by Senator Fuschillo will prohibit prison inmates from being employed in any capacity that affords them access to the collection or processing of social security numbers. For years, a number of data companies and information brokers have employed prisoners to compile and enter sensitive identifying information into databases, which could greatly increase the risk of identity theft. The law takes effect on November 12,

2012.

The second law authored by Senator Fuschillo will make pay-per-call prize schemes illegal in New York State. Pay-per-call prize schemes occur when a consumer receives a recorded phone call alerting them that they have won a prize. In order to claim the prize, consumers have to call a number, but they are often not told that it is a toll number which typically carries a rate of \$9.95 per minute. The consumer is typically put on hold, left to listen to a long pre-recorded message or led through a maze of prompts. Oftentimes, the cost of the call exceeds the value of the prize.

The new law will prohibit companies from holding a contest in which a pay-per-call service is needed to claim the prize and the consumer is charged a higher fee than is assessed by a telephone company regulated by the Public Service Commission. The law takes effect on September 13, 2012.

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