



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senator Young Warns Area Residents To Be Vigilant Against A Computer Hacking Scam

CATHARINE YOUNG October 28, 2015

OLEAN - Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – 57th District) is warning area residents to be vigilant against a computer hacking scam currently circulating via email in the community.

The scam begins when red lines appear on a user's computer screen. The victim is told to contact their "computer security system" at the number provided on the screen to prevent further infection. The "security specialist" who answers at the designated phone number then says they can provide the "necessary instructions" to remove the threatening virus, but only if a retainer fee is first paid. Victims of the scam are then asked for their credit card information and told they will be charged a fee.

"In recent weeks my office has received several reports about a computer scam that has been plaguing our community, putting people's savings and identities at risk. Con artists like the ones who have been reported to my office are masquerading as computer security professionals and taking advantage of people's natural instinct to prevent their personal computers from being breached by an outside virus. Area residents, especially our seniors

and those with limited income, are often the targets of these scams, which can potentially cost victims hundreds or thousands of dollars,” Senator Young said.

A constituent who contacted the New York State Police following a suspicious incident was told that a scam has been circulating in recent months. Investigators noted that the personal emails of government employees had also been targeted.

“Area residents should be extra vigilant in the coming weeks and months, especially as the holiday season approaches and many people are making more purchases online. If you ever believe you are receiving an inappropriate request, I strongly urge you to contact your local law enforcement agency, or the New York State Police. And if you feel your computer has been impacted, always make sure you have repairs done by a reputable security company or computer repair shop,” continued Senator Young.