



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Scam Alert!

SENATOR DAPHNE JORDAN May 17, 2019

| ISSUE: **IDENTITY THEFT AND SCAMS, SENIOR SCAM PREVENTION, SOCIAL SECURITY SCAM**



Recently, a constituent shared with me a story of how their spouse was targeted – three times! – for potential fraud. The fraud was in the form of a voice mail from someone, allegedly with the Social Security Administration, saying they would "suspend the person's Social Security Number due to suspicious activity." The call even listed our regional 518 area code, giving it a semblance of legitimacy. In addition, there have been other reports of similar calls coming from 1-800 numbers as well.

This type of fraud is often known as “caller ID spoofing.” As noted by the Federal Communications Commission, caller ID spoofing is when a caller deliberately falsifies the information transmitted to your caller ID display to disguise their identity. Spoofing is often used as part of an attempt to trick someone into giving away valuable personal information so it can be used in fraudulent activity or sold illegally.

Below is information from the Social Security Administration (SSA) to help protect you and your loved ones from this type of fraud. This information is listed on SSA’s website at <https://blog.ssa.gov/inspector-general-warns-public-about-caller-id-spoofing-of-social-security-fraud-hotline-phone-number/#more-3992>.

### **Inspector General Warns Public About Caller ID “Spoofing” of Social Security Fraud Hot-line Phone Number**

The Inspector General of Social Security, Gail S. Ennis, is warning citizens about a caller-ID “spoofing” scheme misusing the Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of the Inspector General’s (OIG) Fraud Hot-line phone number. The OIG has received recent reports of phone calls displaying the Fraud Hot-line number on a caller-ID screen. This is a scam; OIG employees do not place outgoing calls from the Fraud Hot-line 800 number. Citizens should not engage with these calls or provide personal information.

SSA and OIG employees do contact citizens by telephone for official purposes, and they may request the citizen confirm personal information over the phone. However, the calls do not

appear on caller ID as the Fraud Hot-line number of (800) 269-0271. Also, SSA and OIG employees will never threaten you for information or promise any type of official action in exchange for personal information or payment. In those cases, the call is fraudulent, and you should just hang up.

If you receive a suspicious call from someone alleging to be from SSA or OIG, you should report that information to the OIG online **at <https://oig.ssa.gov/report> or by calling (800) 269-0271, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern Time. You can also report these scams to the Federal Trade Commission through a new site that's specific to Social Security scams: <https://identitytheft.gov/ssa>.**

If you've been targeted by such fraudulent phone calls or other similar suspicious scams, please e-mail my office at **[jordan@nysenate.gov](mailto:jordan@nysenate.gov)** and share all the relevant details. My office will follow-up with you, and lodge a formal complaint for you, with the appropriate federal and state authorities to record the incident to try and prevent future scams.

Remember: identity thieves and scammers are using more and more sophisticated techniques to try stealing your personal and financial information. Knowledge is the best defense against these scam artists. Stay vigilant against scams, report attempted fraud and be safe!