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Alabama Continues to Advance the Fight against Identity Theft Tax Fraud

ADOR Partnering with IRS, Tax Industry to Better Protect Taxpayers

MONTGOMERY, Aug. 27, 2015— The Alabama Department of Revenue is continually working to protect the identities of Alabama taxpayers and prevent tax refund fraud. The department took yet another step toward enhancing the security of the tax return process on Wednesday when Revenue Commissioner Julie P. Magee signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Internal Revenue Service, other state revenue departments, and companies and trade associations in the tax and financial services industries.

“We are working with the IRS and the tax industry to establish stronger security measures, particularly in e-filing, including validation of identity and return information at the time of filing,” Magee said. “These security measures, combined with our established efforts to protect taxpayers here in Alabama through the ID Quiz and a second authentication protocol on My Alabama Taxes (MAT), will provide taxpayers with a safer and more secure filing experience.”

The public-private partnership formed through the MOU stems from a security summit convened by the IRS in March, where tax administrators and industry leaders met to discuss emerging threats and expand existing collaborative efforts to stop fraud. IRS Commissioner John Koskinen hailed “a new era of cooperation and collaboration... that will help combat identity theft and protect taxpayers against tax refund fraud” when the IRS announced the new partnership in June.

The enhanced communication and information sharing agreed to at the summit and in the MOU will better protect taxpayers in a number of ways, including:

- Unmasking criminal schemes and reducing identity theft tax refund fraud;
- Improving methods of verifying taxpayers’ identities;
- Better analyzing return transmission information (such as numerous returns being transmitted from the same IP address) and return preparation times;
- Identifying standard technology practices and innovation for uncovering emerging threats; and
- Educating taxpayers on their roles in protecting sensitive personal, tax and financial data.

The MOU has been endorsed by the Federation of Tax Administrators, the Council for Electronic Revenue Communication Advancement, the American Coalition for Taxpayer Rights, Free File Inc., and the National Association of Computerized Tax Processors.

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