

Ohio Epitomizes Rampant Identity Theft in America

Scottsdale, AZ

Identity Theft 911, the industry leader in identity theft resolution services and proactive education, announced today the release of new research findings that focus on identity theft in Ohio. The research is compiled in a white paper entitled, "**Analysis of Significant Identity Theft Trends & Crime Patterns in the State of Ohio**"; and provides food for thought for the upcoming elections where identity theft is set to become an issue for debate.

According to the white paper, Ohio epitomizes the fact that identity theft is rampant throughout the country. In Ohio last year, there were 329,000 victims of identity theft, suffering \$2.4 billion in losses. That breaks down to \$528 in losses absorbed per each Ohio household. The state has seen a 100.8 percent increase in the crime since 2002.

Ohio, long a bellwether for key developments in the country, has seen the mishandling of official records become political fodder in several major state races, including those for governor and secretary of state. The growing rhetorical battle in these campaigns reflects increasing anxiety among Americans over identity theft; and also shows that voters are starting to see identity theft as a public safety issue.

Steven Christenson, president of Identity Theft 911, says Ohio is not the only place experiencing major problems with this issue. "Identity theft is surging in other states, too. The fact that identity theft has become a big issue in the Ohio governor's race may be an indicator of future political fallout in races all over the country."

He adds, "Identity theft is a real issue for Ohio residents and swift effective action needs to be taken to curb the growing number of victims. This is an issue that won't go away and with the upcoming elections we expect this to feature prominently in the race."

Ohio-based organizations now providing effective identity theft solutions for their customers through Identity Theft 911 include: Grange Mutual Insurance (Columbus); Westfield Insurance Company (Westfield Center); State Auto Insurance Companies (Columbus); German Mutual Insurance Co. (Napoleon); Buckeye Insurance

Group (Piqua); and Heartland Bank (Gahanna). National firms similar programs include: MetLife Auto & Home, Fireman's Fund, Liberty Mutual, Grinnell Mutual and Chubb Insurance.

For more information, a copy of the white paper and a related article which focuses on identity theft as an issue in the forthcoming elections please contact Jennifer Kirchner at jen@blisspr.com or visit the Identity Theft 911 Website at www.identitytheft911.com.

About Identity Theft 911®

Identity Theft 911 provides enterprise-level fraud solutions to Fortune 500 companies, including many of America's largest insurers and corporate benefits providers, as well as a wide spectrum of financial institutions, colleges and universities. Identity Theft 911 is the leader in identity theft victim resolution and education, serving more than 7 million households in its retainer-based program. The Company's cutting-edge products include: RB421(SM), retainer-based blanket resolution and proactive education; IDR911(SM), identity disaster response; SBR911(SM), security breach response; and ITA911(SM), identity travel assistance. Online Banking Report named Identity Theft 911 one of "the 10 most significant innovations and developments of 2003." For more information, visit www.identitytheft911.com. ■

If you are a member of the media, or to schedule an interview with one of our experts, please contact Corporate Communications at 480.355.8500 or by email at media@identitytheft911.com.