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ABA WARNS CONSUMERS OF PHISHING SCAMS

WASHINGTON – The American Bankers Association is warning consumers not to fall victim to a sudden increase in phishing scams that have been reported in states around the country.

According to reports, perpetrators are using automated dialers, text messages or emails to misinform consumers that their accounts have been closed due to fraud. Consumers are then prompted to enter in their card information, including expiration number and three-digit CV code on the back of the card, in order to reactivate their accounts. Those who respond to these inquiries run the potential risk of having their information used to fraudulently purchase goods and services or to obtain credit.

To avoid becoming the victim of a phishing scam, ABA offers the following tips:

- Never give out your personal or financial information in response to an *unsolicited* phone call, fax or email, no matter how official it may seem.
- Do not respond to email that may warn of dire consequences unless you validate your information immediately. Contact the company to confirm the email's validity using a telephone number or Web address you know to be genuine.
- Check your credit card and bank account statements regularly and look for unauthorized transactions, even small ones. Some thieves hope small transactions will go unnoticed. Report discrepancies immediately.
- When submitting financial information online, look for the padlock or key icon at the bottom of your Internet browser. Also, many secure Internet addresses, though not all use "https".
- Report suspicious activity to the Internet Crime Complaint Center, a partnership between the FBI and the National White Collar Crime Center.
- If you have responded to an email, contact your bank immediately so they can protect your account and your identity. For information on identity theft, visit ABA's Consumer Connection.
- For more information on phishing, visit the following: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Anti-Phishing Working Group, the National Consumers League, the OCC Consumer Protection News and the OCC Consumer Complaints and Assistance Web site.

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The American Bankers Association represents banks of all sizes and charters and is the voice for the nation's \$13 trillion banking industry and its two million employees. Learn more at aba.com.

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