



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lee M. Zeldin

Senator Zeldin: New Law Protecting Social Security Numbers Takes Effect This Week

LEE M. ZELDIN December 14, 2012

| ISSUE: **CONSUMER PROTECTION**

| COMMITTEE: **CONSUMER PROTECTION**

Albany, NY- New York State Senator Lee M. Zeldin (R, C, I- Shirley), Chairman of the Senate Consumer Protection Committee, announced that his bill, S.6608-A, which Governor Cuomo recently signed into law, takes effect this week.

The new law is designed to protect consumers from identity theft by making it illegal for individuals or businesses to request your Social Security Number (SSN) except for certain circumstances.

The Federal Trade Commission, Social Security Administration, General Accounting Office and others acknowledge that the widespread public exposure of personal information, especially SSNs, plays a significant role in identity theft.

Despite heightened awareness of this risk, some entities continue to demand that individuals furnish a SSN in circumstances when its use is neither required by law or necessary. Consumers are often given the impression that release of their SSN is mandatory. In some instances, the disclosure of one's SSN has been made a condition for obtaining services.

"This new law helps to protect consumers. Many times, when shopping for goods or services, you are led to believe that you must disclose your Social Security Number to get a reward or sales price," said Senator Zeldin. "This law protects your Social Security Number, your privacy and your identity."

Violators of the new law, which goes into effect this week, could face a fine up to \$500 per violation.