

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG STRANGE WARNS OF FAKE DEBT COLLECTOR CALLS TARGETING BANKRUPTCY FILERS

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange warns of a scam targeting bankruptcy filers around the country in which the scammers use Caller ID “spoofing” and victims’ personal information to collect bogus debts.

Scammers armed with publicly available documents about bankruptcy filers are using that information to pose as attorneys demanding immediate wire payment of a debt. Perpetrators “spoof” the Caller ID system to make it appear they are calling from a bankruptcy attorney’s office, often times phoning after business hours to make it difficult to verify they are not legitimate.

In most cases, the scammers inform their victims they must wire a debt payment immediately or face arrest. Attorney General Strange warns that such calls are fraudulent and anyone receiving them should report them to law enforcement.

According to the National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys, “Under no circumstances would a bankruptcy attorney or a staff member telephone a client and ask for a wire transfer to immediately satisfy a debt. Nor would the bankruptcy attorney and staff ever threaten arrest if a debt isn’t paid.”

Attorney General Strange urges consumers to be on alert to such scams. “You should be suspicious of any call you receive demanding you make immediate payment of a debt or face arrest. Debt collectors cannot arrest you. Frequently debt collection scams also claim to be calling on behalf of the IRS, law enforcement, the courts and even the Attorney General’s Office demanding immediate payments. Consumers should never give out personal information over the telephone and should verify the identity of any caller seeking payments.”

For more information on ways to protect yourself from consumer fraud, visit the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection web site: <http://www.ago.state.al.us/Page-Consumer-Protection>, or call 1-800-392-5658.

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