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LEGISLATION TO HELP VICTIMS OF IDENTITY THEFT

BISMARCK – Legislation proposed by Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem will give North Dakota consumers another level of protection against Identity Theft. The bill would require companies that collect, maintain, and sell personal information to notify North Dakota consumers of a security breach.

In recent security breaches at ChoicePoint, one of the nation's largest "personal data warehouses," thieves were able to access the company's computer systems and steal personal information, including social security numbers, of thousands of individuals. 137 victims of the ChoicePoint thefts are believed to live in North Dakota.

"As the number of these incidents escalates we need to ensure that these companies are required to notify any affected consumers in North Dakota when a security breach occurs. Identity theft is a horrendous crime with devastating personal consequences to the victims. These potential victims must be provided timely notice in order to protect themselves from ID theft," Stenehjem said.

The North Dakota legislation mirrors California law requiring notification of security breaches to consumers. Georgia, New York, and Texas are among other states that are considering security breach notification laws.

Consumers with questions about ChoicePoint, or Identity Theft, should contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-472-2600, or 701-328-3404.

The bill is: SB 2251.