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Jesse White Unveils New Securities Campaign Urging People to Investigate Before Investing

Courts Ordered More Than \$33 Million in Repayments to Victims of Fraud Last Year

Secretary of State Jesse White announced the kick-off of a new public awareness campaign aimed at encouraging people to investigate before they invest. In Illinois, courts ordered scammers to repay more than \$33 million to victims last year with the Secretary of State's Securities Department handling more than 400 such cases of investment fraud.

The new campaign includes television and radio ads airing statewide to encourage people to research investment advisors and brokers, as well as investment opportunities before investing any money. Investors can find information on how to avoid potential con artists and scams by visiting the Secretary of State's website at www.AvoidTheScam.net or calling 800-628-7937.

"It's important to check before investing," White said. "We want to make sure that Illinoisans don't lose their hard-earned money to fraudulent individuals or organizations. Remember the old adage when investing, 'If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.'"

The two public service announcements are based on actual cases from the Secretary of State's files in which innocent people were defrauded out of their hard-earned money. In one case, a senior citizen lost his life savings to a criminal who stole almost \$8 million dollars from more than 50 Illinois investors. In another case, an Illinois man was one of 2,000 victims who together lost \$10.7 million in a scheme targeting members of a religious organization.

In addition to the commercials, two long form videos were created to inform the public about investment fraud. Both can be viewed by visiting www.AvoidTheScam.net. The videos provide information on how to be aware of potential scams and will be featured at statewide events and seminars held by the Secretary of State Securities Department to educate potential victims including seniors and members of community and religious organizations.

Before investing, visit www.AvoidTheScam.net to:

- Print out a list of questions to ask brokers before investing
- Check whether the broker or advisor is registered with the state or has a disciplinary history
- File an online complaint
- Download free educational materials

The Secretary of State Securities Department registers and regulates the following: entities offering and selling securities, broker-dealers, investment advisors, salespersons and representatives of dealers and advisers, loan brokers, business brokers, and those offering business opportunities.



Secretary of State Jesse White announced the kick-off of a new public awareness campaign aimed at encouraging people to investigate before they invest. The campaign includes television and radio ads airing statewide. Last year in Illinois, courts ordered scammers to repay more than \$33 million to victims. Secretary White is pictured with Tanya Solov, director of the Secretary of State Securities Department.