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STENEHJEM WARNS ABOUT TEXT MESSAGING SCAM

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem is warning North Dakota cell phone subscribers about a new text message scam. The Consumer Protection division of his office received reports that several Fargo cell phone users have received a text message claiming there was an issue with their account at First Community Credit Union and directing them to call 888-767-7682.

The text message is not from First Community Credit Union. In fact, the number connects to an automated system for the “General Protection Department” and requests callers to answer three questions and to disclose a credit card or bank account number.

“This text message scam is designed to get the recipients to reveal out confidential personal or financial information in order to steal this information for identity theft or other illegal purposes,” Stenehjem said. “Do not, under any circumstances, respond to this text message.”

Stenehjem reminds citizens that banks and other financial institution never e-mail, call, or text consumers to obtain or confirm passwords, PINs, or other identifying information regarding the consumer’s account. “Your bank or credit card company already has your PINs, passwords, or other identifying information and would never need you to provide that information in an e-mail, phone call, or text message,” Stenehjem said.

Parrell Grossman, Director of the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division, cautioned that this particular text message is just one variation of the text message scams. “Today, the text message appears to be from First Community Credit Union. Tomorrow, it’s from another credit union or financial institution elsewhere in the state,” Grossman said. “Anyone receiving a text message, e-mail, or telephone call asking for confidential or personal financial information should contact the Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division, if they have any questions,” he said. The consumer protection division toll-free telephone number is 1-800-472-2600.

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