



Department
of Commerce

NEWS RELEASE

John R. Kasich, Governor

**David Goodman, Director
Department of Commerce**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dennis Ginty at (614) 644-9564

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE **WARNS OHIOANS OF UNCLAIMED FUNDS SCAM**

David Goodman, Director of the Ohio Department of Commerce, warned Ohioans today to be alert to an e-mail scam telling the recipient that they have international unclaimed funds worth millions in cash.

The e-mail fraudulently says it is from an unclaimed funds official and implies that an FBI agent vetted the matter. It tries to sound official and that the recipient doesn't have to pay to obtain the funds. If an e-mail recipient responds, they are directed to contact an overseas attorney.

"Pure and simple – this is a scam. We will not have Ohioans ripped off by taking advantage of our unclaimed funds program that returns Ohioans' hard-earned money to the rightful owners," Director Goodman said. "The sender of the e-mail is not looking to return the money – they want to trick the recipient to obtain their personal financial information."

Director Goodman is concerned that the fraudulent e-mail is attributed to the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators. The department's Division of Unclaimed Funds is a member of the organization. "This fraudulent e-mail simply has nothing to do with unclaimed funds," Director Goodman said.

The Division of Unclaimed Funds would not direct a claims recipient to a private third party, charge fees to claim funds, or request bank account information. The Division would be able to provide information on who reported the funds and be able to assist in the claims process.

The Ohio Division of Unclaimed Funds works aggressively to reunite Ohioans with their hard-earned money. In Fiscal Year 2011, the Division returned more than \$60.9 million to current or former Ohioans. The average paid claim was for \$1,318.

If an Ohioan should receive the e-mail, Director Goodman encourages them to delete it or report it to the Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov

#

Ohioans can search for unclaimed funds at the Division's website at www.com.ohio.gov/unfd/TreasureHunt.aspx. Individuals without Internet access can write to the Division with the names to be checked and the Ohio counties in which the individual(s) have lived. The Division's address is:

Ohio Department of Commerce
Division of Unclaimed Funds
77 South High Street, 20th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Below are the fraudulent e-mails being circulated:

Fraud Message 1:

ATTN: NOTICE OF YOUR UNCLAIMED FUND VALUED \$2.8M

My name is Jeff Smith, Director National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators (NAUPA). I write to inform you that an FBI Inspection Agent attached to our organization has notified us of a recovered abandoned shipment at Hartsfield International Airport Atlanta Georgia through a Diplomat from United Kingdom via Africa Metal Trunk Box weighing approximately 25kg containing cash valued \$2.8million which has your email address and name attached as beneficiary/next of kin.

The consignment was abandoned because the Content was not properly declared by the consignee as (cash) rather it was declared as personal effect their aim is to avoid diversion by the Shipping Agent. Also, the Diplomat inability to pay for Non Inspection Fees. As our duty, is to promote and support excellence and professionalism, hence we decided to contact you in respect to your consignment.

The National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators (NAUPA) is a non-profit organization hence we do not charge an fee (s) for our services. Our duty is to guide you until such a time that you have received your unclaimed fund/property and we are affiliated with the National Association of State Treasurers and the Council of State Governments and our Members represent all states, the District of Columbia, and other international governmental entities around the World. We provides a forum for uniform laws, thereby protecting and returning unclaimed property to rightful owners.

To claim your consignment, kindly reconfirm the following:

- 1.Your full name:.....
- 2.Your residence address:.....
- 3.Your telephone number:.....
- 4.Your age:.....
- 5.Your occupation:.....

Upon your response, we shall direct you to an accredited attorney to our organization to assist you in processing/releasing of your entitlement.

Thanks

Mr. Jeff Smith.
Director National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators (NAUPA)

Fraud Message 2 (follow-up sent...after a recipient responded):

ATTN: [REDACTED]

Be inform that your reconfirmed personal details was received and I want you to be rest assured that our organization will guide you to receive your fund,

Meanwhile, I advice [advise] you to contact Mr. John Duncan Brown an accredited attorney to our organization who is based in United Kingdom the origin of the shipped consignment, this is to enable him officially process and declare the real content as cash so that the FBI, can release your consignment without delay.

Below are his contact information:

Mr. John Duncan Brown

Email: (j.johnb [REDACTED]@gmail.com)

Tel:+44-[REDACTED]

Please, you should inform Mr. Brown, the best way you wish to receive your funds, either by cash shipment to your designated address or we can lodge it into a bank then request them to transfer to your bank account.

Thanks

Mr. Jeff Smith.

Director National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators (NAUPA)