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District Attorney Leone Warns Residents Of Lottery Scam

MEDFORD – Middlesex District Attorney Gerry Leone is warning all residents, especially seniors, of a telemarketing scam that is occurring in many communities, including Medford and its surrounding communities.

Numerous seniors have recently received calls claiming they have won the lottery and need to pay the caller a fee to receive the winnings. In two recent cases, the scammers asked for \$500 and \$1,000 to be sent to a P.O. Box in order for the victims to claim their “winnings”.

“This is a telemarketing scam that is targeting seniors in our communities,” District Attorney Leone said. “We are warning citizens never to send money or checks to anyone who has randomly contacted you that you do not know, especially when that person has a foreign address or telephone number. If you feel that you have been a victim of this or a similar scam, we urge you to contact your local police department.”

The lottery scam is conducted by a third party who contacts a victim by phone and convinces the victim that they have won a lottery. The party then tells the victim that, in order to claim their winnings, they must pay the taxes on the prize money. This tax amount is usually in the thousands of dollars. After the victim mails the check, the subject says that they should wait until a fictitious date, when the winnings will be awarded. The winnings are never sent.

If you have been contacted by someone who has told you that you have won a lottery, please contact your local police department immediately. Also, **if you recognize that you have been contacted by the following phone numbers**, please report this to your local police:

1-876-397-5452
1-876-894-3554
1-876-486-2159

District Attorney Leone is committed to ensuring the safety and protection of elders and established the office's Elder Affairs Program to focus on the unique concerns facing the elder community. In the fall of 2008, District Attorney Gerry Leone created the LEAPS (Leaders in Elder Abuse Prevention) initiative in an effort to pull together agencies and health care providers responsible for the care of senior citizens. Members of the LEAPS program work together to identify seniors who may be the subject of abuse or who are living in at-risk situations and assure that they are offered the proper care and services to prevent negative situations from developing. The group also engages in trainings and information sessions to assure that all members are up-to-date on proper techniques and strategies to protect elders.