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For Immediate Release

FTC HELPS CONSUMERS PROTECT THEMSELVES THROUGH NEW IDENTITY THEFT PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

White House simultaneously launches identity theft task force

WASHINGTON, DC, May 11, 2006—The Identity Theft Assistance Center hailed the Federal Trade Commission’s new identity theft public education campaign, “AvOID Theft: Deter, Detect, Defend,” as an important new tool in safeguarding the public against identity theft.

“Consumers need to know how to reduce their risk of becoming a victim of identity theft,” said Anne Wallace, executive director of ITAC. “The FTC campaign is a grassroots program that puts information about identity theft prevention into the hands of those who are closest to their communities.”

ITAC and the Financial Services Roundtable will help the FTC by distributing the kits to members of each organization, which represent the nation’s largest integrated financial services companies. ITAC will feature the FTC materials on its web site, www.identitytheftassistance.org.

The FTC and Justice Department will send education kits to 4,500 victim advocates across the country. Materials in “AvOID Theft: Deter, Detect, Defend,” include a victim recovery guide, training booklet and a 10-minute video on identity theft. The materials are available through a toll-free number (1-800-IDTHEFT) and Web site (<http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/>)

The program coincides with issuance of an executive order signed by President Bush, creating an Identity Theft Task Force, chaired by Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales and co-chaired by FTC Chairman Deborah Platt Majoras. The Task Force will develop a strategic plan to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of government efforts to deter, prevent, detect, investigate, and prosecute identity theft.

“We commend the Administration’s leadership in finding solutions to the challenges faced by those who investigate and prosecute these criminals,”

Wallace said. "ITAC and The Financial Services Roundtable look forward to working with the task force."

About ITAC

The Identity Theft Assistance Center (ITAC) (www.identitytheftassistance.org) is a cooperative initiative founded by the financial services industry that now welcomes companies in other industries targeted by identity thieves. Since it was established in August 2004, ITAC has helped thousands of consumers restore their financial identities. ITAC shares information with the Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Sentinel database, which can be accessed by more than 1,000 law enforcement agencies nationwide. Part of the ongoing industry focus on combating fraud and identity theft, ITAC is run by the Identity Theft Assistance Corporation, a not-for-profit membership corporation sponsored by The Financial Services Roundtable and BITS.

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