



May 24, 2006

**Identity Theft Assistance Center Statement on
Veteran's Affairs Information Breach**

The recent theft of personal data from the Department of Veteran's Affairs highlights the urgent need to protect sensitive data in the hands of federal agencies.

Earlier this month, the Bush Administration issued an executive order to strengthen federal protections against identity theft, and established an identity theft task Force chaired by the U.S. Attorney General and the chairman of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). A critical element of the task force mission is to "increase safeguards that Federal departments, agencies, and instrumentalities can implement to better secure government-held personal data."

The Identity Theft Assistance Center (ITAC), a not-for-profit initiative of the financial services industry, commends the Administration's timely implementation of this executive order, which calls for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to addressing identity theft. ITAC and its members are committed to working with the task force on behalf of our customers.