Huge Data Breach by the State of Texas Exposes Millions to Identity Theft - An ACCESS Fraud Alert

April 15, 2011 - A huge data breach by the State Comptroller's office in Texas has exposed between 2 and 3 million people to identity thieves. A worker in the office posted the names, birth dates, addresses and Social Security Numbers of well over two million people who have applied for unemployment to a public server, accessible via the internet. It is yet another example of the poor data security standards in place in government offices across the country.

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var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];
s.type = 'text/javascript';
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);
})();

The State Comptroller found out about the breach at the end of March, but didn't report it to the State Attorney General until a week after the discovery. The posted data has since been removed from the internet, but there is absolutely no way to know that identity thieves didn't get to it first. The state has not said how long they believe the data was available via the internet.

ACCESS is advising anyone who thinks that they may have had their data exposed through this breach to look at their credit report regularly. Victims of this breach should place fraud alerts on their credit files, and should seriously consider placing a freeze on their credit file.

CBS Television in Tyler Texas filed the following video report on the breach which our readers may find informative.

byJim Malmberg

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