



**Attorney General Steve Marshall Joins 42 Attorneys General in Calling on
Social Security Administration to Curb
Synthetic Identity Theft**

(MONTGOMERY) - Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall joined 42 other attorneys general in urging the Social Security Administration to implement stronger procedures to combat the growing problem of identity fraud including synthetic identity theft.

“Consumers in our respective jurisdictions continue to contact us about the growing problem of identity fraud,” Attorney General Marshall and the other attorneys general wrote in their joint letter to Acting Social Security Commissioner Nancy A. Berryhill on Monday. “The fraud comes in various forms and causes various harms, including monetary loss, damage to credit score, and detriment to personal security. As both law enforcement officials and advisors to government agencies, we know the challenges of keeping government systems a step ahead of fraudulent actors. Although the challenge may be great, we urge you to prioritize making your systems as nimble and strong as possible to combat this growing problem.”

Congress passed legislation this year directing the Social Security Administration to develop an electronic database to facilitate the verification of a consumer’s information when requested by a certified financial institution with the person’s consent. Previously, such verifications were done by paper. The new federal mandate is meant to address “synthetic identity theft” in which fraudsters use real social security numbers along with fictitious names and birthdates to create “synthetic” identities.

The attorneys general asked Acting Social Security Commissioner Berryhill to promptly comply with the provisions of the law. “As enforcers of the data breach laws in our jurisdictions, we see the impact that exposure of Social Security Numbers can have. Our residents lose thousands of dollars each year from ruined credit scores, as well as a general sense of anxiety regarding their identity.”

Synthetic identity theft, which is reported to constitute the majority of identity fraud in the country, often targets those with newly-issued Social Security numbers, including children and recent immigrants.

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The AG letter was co-led by attorneys general of Kansas and Oregon and joined by Attorney General Marshall along with the attorneys general of Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

[Link to the AG Coalition's Letter](#)