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NEWS RELEASE

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BEWARE "THE NEXT BIG THING"

Department of Finance Cautions Investors to Be Wary

Boise, ID – The Idaho Department of Finance issued an advisory today reminding investors to be cautious when considering investing in three products recently making news: marijuana-related investments, binary options and digital currency. The advisory is on the Department's website at www.finance.idaho.gov

"It may seem that these products have no real connection to one another. But what they all have in common is their recent emergence as three investments that both sellers and buyers hope will become the 'next big thing.' Before you consider investing, make sure you understand what these products are, their benefits, and their risks," said Gavin, Gee, Director of the Department of Finance. The advisory includes information to help investors better understand each of these products, including their risks.

As more jurisdictions clarify their legal definitions on the growth and use of medical and recreational marijuana, an increasing number of companies focused on the marijuana industry are seeking funds from investors. Marijuana investment opportunities may be particularly susceptible to scams, such as micro-cap 'pump-and-dump,' schemes in which promoters use misinformation to pressure investors to get in on the 'ground floor' thereby inflating the company's share prices before being sold by the promoters

A binary option investment is based on the investor's prediction of an underlying security's value at a predetermined date. There are only two possible outcomes: the investor may receive a fixed amount of money for guessing correctly, or lose the entire investment for guessing incorrectly. Binary options are simplified options contracts that look more like online gambling than a traditional security or investment. Many of these unlicensed solicitors work from overseas, but some operate in and from the United States.

Bitcoin and other digital currency remain in the headlines as new exchanges emerge claiming to be licensed and regulated by federal, state, or jurisdictional financial authorities and as a growing number of brand-name retailers accepting digital currency as payment for goods and services. Since there is little uniformity on how Bitcoin and digital currency is regulated, scammers will take advantage of the confusion and contradictions to misinform and mislead. "While digital currencies are not the culprit, they can be the bait for a dubious investment scheme," said Gee.

The bottom line is that before making any decisions with your money, ask questions, make sure you understand the risks, and check with the Idaho Securities Bureau before you invest to find out if the investments and the salespeople are qualified in Idaho.

The advisory is available on the agency's website at <http://finance.idaho.gov>. For more information, Investors can contact the Department at (208) 332-8004 or by visiting for more information.

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