



C. L. "BUTCH" OTTER  
Governor

GAVIN M. GEE  
Director

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

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**AVOID GETTING SCAMMED IN TIMES OF TURMOIL**

*Financial Literacy Month Smart Investor Tip of the Week – Always Investigate Before You Invest!*

Boise, Idaho . . . Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter has declared April as "Financial Literacy Month." The Department of Finance will issue a "Tip of the Week" each week during the month.

In the wake of the current economic turmoil in Idaho and throughout the nation, Gavin Gee, director of the Idaho Department of Finance, is warning investors to be on the lookout for opportunistic scams. In times of tragedy, confusion, fear and uncertainty, there are always those who will attempt to prey on the investing public.

"Cold-calling telephone salespeople, advertisements or Internet postings that tout commodities, exotic financial products or technologies related to recent events should be a red flag for investors," Gee said. "Investors should be especially wary of enticements to send their money offshore to so-called 'safe havens.'"

Recalling that many con artists exploited fears associated with the Year 2000 computer bug (Y2K) and the 9/11 terrorist attacks to pitch investments in precious metals, emergency preparedness scams and non-existent technology companies, the Department of Finance urges investors to:

- Hang up on aggressive cold callers promoting "safe" investments with "guaranteed returns" and ignore unsolicited e-mail or Internet chat room talk about small companies with new technologies or products related to the recent events.
- Call the Department of Finance Idaho toll free number 1-888-346-3378 to ask if the seller is licensed to sell securities in Idaho and if the security is properly registered.
- Request written information that fully explains the investment, such as a prospectus or offering circular. The documentation should contain enough clear and accurate information to allow you or your financial adviser to evaluate and verify the particulars of the investment.
- Get a professional, third-party opinion when presented with investment opportunities that seem to offer unusually high returns in comparison to other investment options. Pie-in-the-sky promises often signal investment fraud.

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April is Financial Literacy Month. Department of Finance Press Releases and other information can be found on the Internet at <http://finance.idaho.gov> and may be obtained by contacting the department at (208) 332-8000 or Idaho toll-free at 1-888-346-3378.

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