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ALASKA STATE EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION (ASEA) DEMANDS LONG-TERM SECURITY FOR POTENTIAL IDENTITY THEFT VICTIMS

ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 seeking further information and protections for past and current employees

March 4, 2010 – ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 is taking steps today to protect its members after learning that a state contractor lost the confidential personal information of over 77,000 active employees, inactive employees and retirees. The information includes names, social security numbers and dates of birth, information that may be used to perform identity theft.

The data was lost when a Price/Waterhouse contractor performing analysis for the state misplaced the data during an office move.

ASEA has a number of concerns regarding the loss of the information and the state's response:

- ASEA does not believe that the state's offer of two years of free identity theft protection relieves the state of responsibility for the incident. It is ASEA's position that the state should be responsible for any damage that may result, including damage that occurs outside this arbitrary two-year window.
- The state's decision to make employees protect themselves, by explicitly enrolling in the identity theft protection program, is backwards. Affected individuals should be enrolled automatically. ASEA also believes that the state remains responsible for any harm, regardless of whether an individual has explicitly requested the protection service.
- There are many unanswered questions. The victims deserve full disclosure about what happened, what efforts, if any, are still being made to find and recover the missing data, and what is being done to prevent such leaks from happening in the future.

"We are very troubled by this loss of confidential personal information of our members, other public employees and retirees," said Jim Duncan, ASEA/AFSCME Local 52 Business Manager, "It could be extremely damaging to those individuals whose data has been lost, and the state's response appears to be insufficient."

Duncan has sent a letter to Annette Kreitzer, Commissioner of the Department of Administration, expressing the union's concerns and asking for additional information about the nature of the loss of this information.

"We are encouraging our members to sign up for the programs offered in the settlement, but we look forward to the state offering a real solution for the long term security of those affected," Duncan concluded.

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