



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

New Laws Will Protect Against Identity Theft

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This week, Senator Bill Larkin reports to residents that New York State has enacted three new laws that will combat the crime of identity theft. The measures establish the Consumer Communication Records Privacy Act, place limits on the use and disclosure of Social Security account numbers, and further clarify what is considered a computer crime.

"These new tough laws will serve law abiding citizens who need to do everything possible to protect their good names, their privacy, and their personal security," said Senator Larkin. "They will also greatly assist law enforcement officials in their efforts to fight identity theft and the people who would take advantage of unsuspecting victims."

The Consumer Communication Records Privacy Act, cosponsored by Senator Larkin, protects consumers by prohibiting the unauthorized release of a consumer's telephone records without consent from the consumer.

To guard against the potential misuse of Social Security account numbers (SSN), a second new law will prohibit the intentional communication of an individual's SSN to the general public; restrict businesses' ability to print an individual's SSN on mailings or on any card or tag required to access products, services, or benefits; prohibit businesses from requiring an individual to transmit his or her encrypted SSN over the Internet; and require businesses that possess SSNs to implement appropriate safeguards and limit unnecessary employee access to SSNs.

Recognizing that consumers are becoming more heavily reliant on computers to accomplish everyday tasks such as paying bills, and online-shopping, a third new law allows for the prosecution of those who intentionally disrupt, steal personal information, and plant malicious programs on private computers.