



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Don't Be Fooled By This Offer: "money To Pay Your Taxes"

[WILLIAM J. LARKIN JR.](#) March 16, 2005

This week, Senator Bill Larkin warns residents about the latest telemarketing scam.

"Don't be fooled by anyone offering 'free government grants,' said Senator Larkin. "This latest scam has a new twist--someone calls you making a phony claim that the government is giving people money to pay their taxes. I know that this time of year, it's tempting to want to believe there is something that can help during tax season, but under no circumstances should you engage these people in conversation and give out any personal information over the phone. If you get a call like this -- just hang up."

Telemarketers want your checking account number and if they're successful, they can withdraw money from your account without you signing or giving them a check.

At least two nationwide telemarketing scams are claiming to have "hidden money" from that government that can be used to pay people's taxes.

Scholarship aid and disaster assistance funds have also been used in these "grant offers" by telemarketing scam artists.

"Con artists know a good scam when they see one," said Larkin. "They're experts at playing on people's weaknesses, and they know people can be vulnerable during tax season.

Remember that in most cases, government assistance is only available to people with special

needs such as the elderly, or people with low-incomes or disabilities."

If you ever receive one of these calls, you should file a complaint with the New York State Consumer Protection Board by calling 1-800-697-1220 (inside New York State only).