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Mail remains most secure way to send and share information *White House report issued today outlines steps to combat ID Theft*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Mail remains the safest way to communicate and share information, and represents the smallest threat to identity theft.

“The President’s Identity Theft Task Force,” released today by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC), is a strategic plan for government agencies to follow in efforts to combat identity theft. The FTC reports that less than 4 percent of all identity theft can be traced to the mail. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service served on the task force.

The Postal Service already has in place the top four recommendations included in the report:

- ~~///~~ Replaced Social Security Numbers with unique Employee Identification Numbers. Social Security Numbers are the most valuable commodity for an identity thief.
- ~~///~~ Developed systems to quickly alert private sector companies and consumer information should a security breach occur. The Task Force recommends that national standards be established for private sector entities as well.
- ~~///~~ Sponsored an awareness campaign for consumers, partners, companies and employees to warn against identity theft; and
- ~~///~~ Establish a National Identity Theft Law Enforcement Center, similar to one created by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, that coordinates efforts and information efficiently.

Two years ago, the Postal Inspection Service created the Intelligence Sharing Initiative, a website that allows inspectors and fraud investigators representing retail and financial institutions, as well as major mailers, to share information relating to identity theft, as well as financial crimes investigations and prevention methods.

This effort came more than 15 years after the Inspection Service began a Credit Card Mail Security Initiative to work more effectively with the credit card industry to reduce fraud losses.

The U.S. Postal Service is recognized nationally as the most trusted agency in the federal government. For the third year in a row, the Postal Service ranked first among more than 80 agencies for protection of privacy and trust in a national survey by the Ponemon Institute. In a separate survey, Ponemon reported that the Postal Service ranks sixth among private industry companies for trust. No other shipping company in the United States made the Top 10.

Please note: A copy of the complete Strategic Plan can be found at www.idtheft.gov.

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An independent federal agency, the **U.S. Postal Service** is the only delivery service that visits every address in the nation, 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to pay for operating expenses, not tax dollars. The Postal Service has annual revenues of \$73 billion and delivers almost half of the world's mail volume.

The mission of the **U.S. Postal Inspection Service** is to protect the U.S. Postal service, its employees and its customers from criminal attack, and to protect the nation's mail system from criminal misuse. Postal Inspectors are mandated to safeguard the entire postal system, including the nearly 700,00 employees who process and deliver the mail and the millions of customers who use it.