

Columbus Office:
(614) 466-3485
(614) 719-3911 (fax)
Rep15@ohiohouse.gov

District:
Parts of Cuyahoga County



Committees:
Civil Justice
Financial Institutions
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Jeffrey A. Crossman
State Representative
15th House District

August 17, 2021

Dear Director Damschroder,

During the August 5, 2021 meeting of the Unemployment Compensation Modernization & Improvement Council (“UCMIC”) we heard witness testimony regarding the hacking of JFS’s system. The testimony of hacking along with your unsatisfactory response continues to cause concerns that JFS may not be sufficiently addressing cybersecurity or protecting Ohioans’ sensitive information.

According to the testimony on August 5th, an unknown hacker changed the claimant’s bank routing number *in the JFS system* and redirected funds from her to the criminal’s account instead. This left the claimant without the funds JFS owed her (approximately \$900) and JFS claiming that they would not pay her for the missing funds. As I mentioned during the hearing, this is similar to another incident referred to my office earlier this year. My office referred this similar hacking incident to JFS’s attention on June 15, 2021.

Despite the foregoing, you stated during the hearing that “there is no evidence” of hacking--- immediately after a witness had *just testified* that hacking had occurred. This response suggests that JFS is not taking the issue of cybersecurity seriously and, if that is the case, it is alarming given the significant personal information that is contained in the JFS database. Ohioans must have assurances that their bank account information, social security numbers, and other personal identifying information are completely secure in the state’s hands and not subject to cybercriminals poised to steal people’s identities and wreak financial havoc on the lives of people already experiencing financial difficulties.

Therefore, I am requesting that you provide more detail regarding JFS’s effort to secure this sensitive information. Specifically, I would like the following information provided to my office for review:

- Documentation of any investigation into incidents of alleged hacking;
- Documentation regarding JFS’s response to inquiries related to alleged hacking.
- Documentation of all reports to JFS of “stolen” funds or altered bank routing numbers.
- Description of the security measures implemented in JFS systems to ensure Ohioans’ personal data will not be compromised.
- Documentation related to any consideration of utilization of the National Guard’s Cyber-Reserve Unit to assist with JFS cybersecurity.

I intend to provide this information to the UCMIC but also regard these requests as public-record requests pursuant to Ohio R. C. Sections 149.43 to 149.44. Given the urgency of this issue, I ask that you provide this information as soon as possible but no later than ten (10) business days from the date of this letter.

Thank you in advance for your prompt response to this request

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Crossman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Rep. Jeffrey A. Crossman
State Representative
Ohio House District 15

cc: Sen. Bob Hackett, UCMIC Co-Chair
Rep. Mark Frazier, UCMIC Co-Chair
Rep. Lisa Sobecki
Rep. Derrick Merrin
Sen. Teresa Fedor
Sen. Bill Reineke