



DEBRA BOWEN | SECRETARY OF STATE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA | BUSINESS PROGRAMS

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Stronger Laws to Prevent Fraudulent Solicitations

As of January 1, 2012, there are new laws to prevent people from sending misleading solicitations to Californians. These misleading, or scam, solicitations appear to be from California government agencies and threaten business owners with fines if they do not file required forms. The people behind these scams charge several hundred dollars to file forms that would only have a small fee if they were filed directly with the government.

To protect California business owners, Secretary of State Debra Bowen sponsored [Assembly Bill 75](#), which now requires new disclaimers to be added to third-party mailings. The new law:

- Requires the following disclaimer to be on the front and back of every page, in font that is at least 12-point boldface capital letters and at least 2-point font type sizes larger than the next largest font on the page:

THIS PRODUCT OR SERVICE HAS NOT BEEN APPROVED
OR ENDORSED BY ANY GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY, AND
THIS OFFER IS NOT BEING MADE BY AN AGENCY OF
THE GOVERNMENT.

- Forbids the soliciting company from using a name that may make the recipient of the mailing believe it is from a governmental entity, like the Secretary of State's Business Programs Division.
- Increases the penalty from \$1,000 to \$2,500 per violation.

Action for Fraudulent Letters

California businesses that receive a scam solicitation letter are encouraged to mail a written complaint along with the entire solicitation (including the solicitation letter, the outer and return envelopes, and all related documents) to the California Attorney General's office, Public Inquiry Unit, P.O. Box 944255, Sacramento, California 94244-2550.

A complaint form, which can be completed online and printed to mail, is available on the California Attorney General's website at www.ag.ca.gov/consumers/general.php.