Barickman experiences identity theft, warns constituents

BLOOMINGTON—After discovering he was a victim of unemployment insurance identity theft, state Senator Jason Barickman (R-Bloomington) is reminding people to be vigilant and to report suspected unemployment fraud to the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) and Illinois Attorney General.

“This is a perfect example of how easily this can happen to any of us, there are no job titles or people that are immune to this type of scam,” said Barickman. “If you receive a notice from IDES regarding unemployment benefits that you didn’t apply for, please report it immediately.”

In addition to serving as the senator for the 53rd District, Barickman is also an adjunct professor at Illinois State University. It was his teaching position that was targeted in the unemployment scam. Barickman is urging people to be vigilant and to keep an eye out for any clues that they may have been targeted as well.

According to IDES, the most common signs that you may be the victim of unemployment fraud are:

- You receive a debit card or an unemployment insurance letter (UI Finding) and has not filed a claim for benefits.
- You are notified by your employer that a claim for benefits has been filed when you have not been separated from employment.
- You attempt to file a claim online and one already exists.
- You receive IRS correspondence regarding unreported UI benefits.
- You receive notice of a state or federal tax offset.

The agency recommends that if you suspect unemployment fraud, you should immediately report it to IDES by calling the Benefit Payment Control Division at 800-814-0513.

Earlier this year, IDES reported that there were more than 120,000 suspected cases of unemployment fraud in Illinois from March through August.

“We may not be hearing about unemployment fraud or similar issues as much on the news right now, but the threat remains, so please be vigilant,” said Barickman. “If you are having issues with unemployment fraud or obtaining benefits, please feel free to contact my office. While I don’t have any direct control over IDES, I will continue to work to make sure your issues are brought to their attention.”
No injuries were reported in an accident at 1:55 p.m. Thursday at South Third Ave. and West Penn. Police said Dalton Levy, 22, of Hoopeston, in a 2015 Niss-