



Cornell University
Campus Police

Kathy R. Zoner
Chief

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FRAUD ALERT!!!

October 8, 2014

Dear Cornellian and family,

My offices wish to draw your attention to a persistent fraudulent attempt to coerce you into giving away money. This fraud is being perpetrated by unknown individuals and takes many forms. All attempts so far have been via telephone, and the Caller ID has been falsified to appear to be from either a police agency, a governmental agency such as Immigration or the Internal Revenue Service, or any other official-looking office.

Most times, the caller insists that you, the receiver, are in trouble (at risk for deportation, arrest or other official-sounding issues). In order to alleviate your troubles, the caller asks you to purchase a money card in a substantial amount of US Dollars and read that money card's numbers over the phone to the caller, thereby allowing him to take the funds.

This may happen once, or the caller may call back and try again. The caller may use increasingly persuasive or coercive language to threaten to take action if you do not comply. **NONE OF THIS IS TRUE! YOU DO NOT NEED TO RESPOND IN ANY WAY.**

If you have been contacted by a person pretending to be from an agency as listed above, and the caller attempts to get you to give him or her money for any reason, please hang up and call 607-255-1111 and ask to speak to an officer. You will be put in contact with a real law enforcement officer who will ask you about your phone conversation and relay all information to our investigators for follow up.

I have addressed this issue in my last few weekly blue-light safety e-mails, generally sent out on Friday to all Cornell staff, faculty and students. The fraudulent caller appears to be most successful deceiving international students with limited knowledge of the ways our governmental organizations truly work. We are working closely with ISSO to better inform our international constituents. You are a valued member of our community, and a subscriber to the ISSO listserve, and

therefore are highly likely to be contacted by these callers or know someone who has been contacted. Please share this information as broadly as you like.

If you have any questions as to the legitimacy of a call that you receive from a purported law enforcement or governmental official, **please feel free to contact 607-255-1111 at any time, day or night,** to ascertain the validity of the call. More likely than not, the call is fraudulent if it asks for money in return for protection, asylum or amnesty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K.R. Zoner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Kathy R. Zoner
Chief, Cornell Police