



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

**DCCA News Release**

**LINDA LINGLE**  
GOVERNOR

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**DCCA ISSUES PHISHING ALERT**

(Honolulu)- Governor Linda Lingle received an email on her home computer last week. The subject line read: PRIVATE URGENT MESSAGE FROM CITIBANK.

“The Governor was on the receiving end of what’s known as a “phishing” email,” said Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs Director Mark Recktenwald.

Phishing is exactly that...fishing for information- usually personal information such as credit card or social security numbers.

“The fact that Governor Lingle received an unsolicited email of this kind shows no one is immune to scammers ‘phishing’ for information,” said Recktenwald. “The Governor doesn’t even have a Citibank account. But many people in Hawaii do.”

The Governor is certainly not alone. Hundreds of people in Hawaii receive these legitimate looking emails every day. And in recent months, the number of emails has been on the increase.

Phishing emails are commonly used with a fake website that purports to be a legitimate institution’s website. If the recipient responds to the email by providing confidential information such as a credit card account number, the scammers can use that information to loot the account or open an account.

“Consumers should not respond with personal information to unsolicited emails, no matter who is supposedly sending them,” Recktenwald said. “A person’s bank already has the information that phishing scammers are trying to get.”

If anyone suspects an email or Web site is fake, that person should tell the real entity using known, reliable contact information. Hawaii residents may also contact the DCCA Consumer Resource Center at 587-3222. Help is also available at the Federal Trade Commission website...<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/alerts/phishingalrt.htm>

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