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AG Schimel Investigating Equifax Data Breach

MADISON, Wis. – Today, Attorney General Brad Schimel continued his investigation into credit rating agency Equifax, Inc. for its massive data breach, which impacted approximately 143 million people, by issuing a subpoena seeking detailed information from Equifax about the breach and the Wisconsin residents who were affected.

“I’m concerned about the number of Wisconsinites whose privacy and personal information was violated by the Equifax breach and the steps the company has taken to address these violations since the breach became public,” said Attorney General Schimel. “DOJ is using all tools available to ensure Equifax is acting responsibly and exercising our investigative powers to determine any violations of law and establish the remedies available to affected consumers.”

In the subpoena, Attorney General Schimel asks Equifax to explain the circumstances that led to the breach; the reasons for the long delay between the breach and the company’s public disclosure; the identity of Wisconsin residents affected by the breach; a detailed description of the protections in place at time of the breach and how they failed; and a detailed description of the protections put in place to prevent future harm.

Last week, Attorney General Schimel joined other state attorneys general in investigating Equifax. In a September 19, 2017 letter to Equifax, the attorneys general expressed concerns the states have over Equifax’s offering of fee-based services in response to its breach. In the letter, attorneys general wrote “[w]e believe continuing to offer consumers a fee-based service in addition to Equifax’s free monitoring services will serve to only confuse consumers who are already struggling to make decisions on how to best protect themselves in the wake of this massive breach.” The attorneys general went on to explain “[s]elling a fee-based product that competes with Equifax’s own free offer of credit monitoring services to victims of

Equifax's own data breach is unfair, particularly if consumers are not sure if their information was compromised.”

The attorneys general requested Equifax disable links to its fee-based services until the sign-up period for the free service has ended. They further requested that Equifax extend the free services to at least January 31, 2018, and take steps to reimburse consumers who incur fees from the other two credit reporting agencies to completely freeze their credit.

Wisconsin residents concerned about the breach and what steps to take to protect themselves, can find useful information at the [Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection's website](#).