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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0911

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND
AIR QUALITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE, AND
CONSUMER PROTECTION

March 21, 2006

Mr. David M. Walker
Comptroller General of the United States
General Accounting Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20540

Dear Mr. Walker:

I want to begin by thanking you for the very valuable work that the General Accounting Office has performed in recent years relating to identity theft. Your efforts have helped to frame a very important discussion within Congress about how to best protect American consumers.

During the past year, the nation has heard a great deal about the dangers of identity theft. In fact, almost exactly one year ago today, the House Energy and Commerce Committee, on which I serve, received testimony from the Chief Executive Officers of ChoicePoint and LexisNexis, two of the largest information services providers in the country. As you probably know, the breaches in security at these two companies left hundreds of thousands of citizens around the country vulnerable to identity theft, including thousands of individuals in my home state of Florida.

It is with much regret that I write to you today to inform you of another security breach that has affected more than 150,000 Floridians. In 2002, the State of Florida awarded a \$280 million contract to Convergys that required the firm to manage the state's payroll records. On December 25, 2005, the *Tallahassee Democrat* reported that two former employees of GDXdata Inc., a partner of Convergys in the project, had sued the company because it improperly sent the records of state employees to companies in India, Barbados and possibly China. State law mandates that all employee records are to stay within the United States.

In the past, the most common form of identity theft appeared to be the result of personal information *purposely* stolen by a perpetrator with the intent of doing harm. However, as the Convergys incident in Florida illustrates, information can be passed outside of our borders with the complete and full knowledge of an information services provider, thereby exposing our citizens to an increased risk of identity theft.

I request that the Government Accounting Office conduct an investigation into the outsourcing of personal information to foreign countries with little or no regulations relating to identity theft. Specifically, I am interested in learning about the number of Americans who have unknowingly had their personal information outsourced to another country. Furthermore, I

Mr. David M. Walker

March 21, 2006

Page 2

would like to learn if there have been any major security breaches in the past as a result of information outsourcing, and if so, how many individuals were affected.

If you need further information or have additional questions, please contact Patrick Givens in my office at (202) 225-3376. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "J" and "D".

Jim Davis

Member of Congress