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## **Shuster: Be on the Watch for Tax Scams** *Criminals are Looking to Prey on Stimulus Rebate Checks*

*Washington, D.C.* –As the IRS begins processing rebate checks from the recently enacted economic stimulus package, **Congressman Bill Shuster** would like to remind his constituents to be mindful of criminals looking to take advantage of the rebates.

There have been reports of phone calls and e-mails by people posing as IRS employees asking for personal information to complete the processing of tax rebates. Sometimes, individuals are asked to “validate” or “update” their personal information to apply for a tax rebate.

“It’s important to put safety first. If you get a call or an e-mail about your rebate check, do not give out any personal information,” Shuster said. “Report it to the IRS immediately.”

It is extremely important that residents of the 9<sup>th</sup> district know that the IRS does not contact individual taxpayers by e-mail or by phone regarding their tax rebates. Also, the only way to apply for a tax rebate is to fill out a tax return. Solicitations of this kind are fraudulent and should be reported to the IRS.

An attempt to fraudulently acquire personal and financial information is called “phishing” and it is against the law. If you receive an unsolicited e-mail or phone call claiming to be from the IRS, you can report it by forwarding the e-mail or a description of the call to the following e-mail address: [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov). Additionally, details on some of the most common fraud schemes can be found at the following IRS website: <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=178061,00.html>.

Constituents are welcome to contact Congressman Shuster’s office if they have questions about potential fraud solicitations toll-free at 1-800-854-3035.

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