



For Immediate Release

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NOTE: Video, interviews and images from today's press conference will be available [here](#).

Treasurer Stacy Garrity and PA Bankers Association Join Forces to Help Pennsylvanians Avoid Cyber Fraud

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Harrisburg, PA — Treasurer Stacy Garrity, PA Bankers Association President & CEO Duncan Campbell, and Richard Cimakasky, Penn Community Bank Fraud & Security Officer and former FBI Special Agent, teamed up at a press conference Tuesday to kick off Cybersecurity Awareness Month, warning Pennsylvanians about the dangers of cybersecurity fraud and offering advice on how to make sure their personal information is safe.

“As the primary financial institution of the Commonwealth, Treasury is a major target for cyber criminals – and we have a special obligation to secure the Commonwealth’s financial information against cyber threats,” Treasurer Garrity said. “Cybersecurity is a shared responsibility, and we work closely with other state agencies, outside business partners, and cybersecurity specialists to constantly strengthen our defenses. We also collaborate with local governments to share our experience and advice. I hope Pennsylvanians will take some time this month to make sure they’re secure from bad actors looking to steal their personal information.”

“The financial services industry is the gold standard of cybersecurity. Banks have the highest level of security among critical U.S. industries and the most stringent regulatory requirements,” Campbell said. “By working together with your bank, utilizing tools from the Treasury and other consumer agencies, and keeping an eye on your financial information, you can protect your bank account and maintain your financial well-being.”

“Financial institutions play a pivotal role as advocates and resources in this fight against fraud and cybercrime,” Cimakasky said. “Our commitment to safeguarding customers’ financial well-being extends far beyond traditional banking services. We stand at the forefront of cyber defense, leveraging advanced technology and industry expertise to protect our communities’ hard-earned assets.”

The Pennsylvania Treasury Department processes about 25 million payments each year, making cybersecurity a top priority of the department. Working with strategic cybersecurity partners, such as the National Guard and Carnegie Mellon University, Treasury stays ahead of threats and undergoes weekly cyber security scans, on both internal and external networks, to identify and remediate any potential vulnerabilities.

On average:

- Treasury’s cybersecurity defenses stop more than 20 million unauthorized connection attempts per month.
- Treasury receives more than 130,000 emails per month, about half of which are diverted by our defense systems to prevent them from arriving in any user’s inbox because they’re identified as phishing, spam, or another form of malicious email.
- Treasury prevents more than 85 attempts to login as internal user accounts from blocked geolocations per month.
- Treasury investigates and/or responds to more than 50 automated events and alerts raised by our defense systems each day.

Treasurer Garrity has also directed her IT team to be available to support local agencies with cybersecurity issues. Treasury is an active member of the state’s Enterprise Technology Security Council, which assesses security policies, procedures, and solutions within the Commonwealth’s IT systems, and develops recommendations for increasing their effectiveness. Treasury is also an active member of the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC).

The PA Bankers Association offered ten tips for Pennsylvanians to safeguard their financial information online, including:

- “Snack on your balance” – check your account at least once a day so you notice suspicious activity faster.
- Report any suspicious purchases ASAP.
- Change your online banking password regularly.
- Use passwords that combine letters, numbers, and symbols.
- Never share your username and password.
- Avoid doing online banking or shopping over public wi-fi.

- When shopping online, use reputable merchants and make sure the webpage payment screen begins with “https” and has the tiny padlock symbol at the bottom of the page.
- Don’t open emails that appear suspicious – especially if the message contains links to websites.
- Always log out of your online banking website when you’re done.
- Lock your computer or your smartphone when you’re not using it.

More consumer safety tips can be found on the [PA Bankers Association’s website](#).

PA Bankers has been bringing banks and bankers together for more than 125 years to learn, grow, serve and engage with their peers, communities and lawmakers. The association has built a strong reputation as a leading advocate for pro-banking policies at the state and federal levels, as well as for the delivery of quality education, products and services for banks of all sizes and their employees. Follow the Pennsylvania Bankers Association on Facebook and LinkedIn.

Founded 150 years ago, Penn Community Bank is headquartered in Bucks County, and has grown to become the largest independent mutual bank in eastern Pennsylvania.

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