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NEWS RELEASE

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SACRAMENTO MAN CHARGED WITH COMPUTER FRAUD AND AGGRAVATED IDENTITY THEFT

Internet "Phishing" Scheme Used to Steal Thousands of Credit and Debit Card Numbers, Social Security Numbers

SACRAMENTO - United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott, Special Agent-in-Charge Jean Mitchell, United States Secret Service, and Placer County District Attorney Bradford R. Fenocchio announced today that TIEN TRUONG NGUYEN, aka Tim Nguyen, 29, of Sacramento, California was charged with multiple counts of conspiracy, computer fraud, aggravated identity theft, credit card fraud, and with being a felon-in-possession of a firearm. The Indictment alleges that NGUYEN engaged in a complex fraud scheme in which he used his computer to obtain thousands of credit and debit card numbers, social security numbers, and other personal identification information of individuals throughout the United States.

This case is the product of an extensive joint investigation by the Placer County Sheriff's Office, the Placer County District Attorney's Office, and the United States Secret Service.

According to United States Attorney McGregor Scott, in May 2006, President Bush signed an Executive Order creating the first ever "Identity Theft Task Force." This Task Force helps law enforcement investigate and prosecute identity theft cases, such as the fraud involving NGUYEN. According to Scott, the United States Attorney's Office aggressively pursues identity thieves and works with law enforcement to break up criminal rings which jeopardize our financial security.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Robin R. Taylor, who is prosecuting the NGUYEN case, the Indictment alleges that from on or about October 15, 2005, through on or about January 26, 2007, NGUYEN, and others, not charged in the Indictment, were involved in a sophisticated and international "phishing" identity theft and computer fraud scheme. The Indictment alleges that NGUYEN fraudulently posted web sites which looked identical to legitimate web sites maintained by banks and other businesses, such as Pay Pal. As part of the

conspiracy and the fraud, NGUYEN used e-mail messages, often sent in bulk, to induce third parties to disclose personal and financial information, including credit card and debit card numbers, on the web sites or by e-mail. As part of the fraud scheme, NGUYEN, and others, including individuals in Eastern Europe, fraudulently acquired thousands of credit and debit card numbers, social security numbers and other personal identification information, including the names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses of third parties, without their consent.

The Indictment further alleges that after obtaining this information, NGUYEN, among other things, provided it to third parties who used it to obtain "instant credit" issued by GE Capital, which processed credit requests through computers maintained at Wal-Mart stores. The instant credit was used to purchase gift cards and merchandise valued at more than $200,000. According to the Indictment, NGUYEN and others discuss their fraudulent activities in Internet "chat" messages.

The conspiracy to commit computer and credit card fraud offense carries a maximum penalty under federal law of five years in prison. The credit card fraud offenses carry a maximum penalty of ten years in prison. The aggravated identity theft provision provides for a mandatory minimum of two years in prison, consecutive to any sentence imposed by the court. The felon-in-possession of a firearm charge carries a maximum penalty of ten years in prison. In addition, the defendant may be required to pay a fine and restitution. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors. The defendant is scheduled to appear in Court on May 3, 2007, for an initial appearance and detention hearing.

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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