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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Interior Alaskans should be on ALERT for Financial Scams**

October 5, 2021: Interior Alaskans should be on immediate alert regarding phishing and other scams actively impacting Fairbanks consumers.

According to Denali State Bank's Chief Operations Officer, Andra Lozano:

The financial industry in Fairbanks is seeing an uptick in various phone, email, and text messaging scams causing grave financial harm to consumers. Currently, scammers are calling individuals posing as employees from Amazon, Alaska Airlines, and Pay Pal. *It's important for consumers to know that representatives from these large companies will not call individuals seeking payment or immediate action from their customers.* If you receive a call from someone claiming to be customer service, it is best to end the call and access the company using published customer service methods, most commonly available directly through the company website or mobile app.

The fraudsters often press for an immediate or urgent response; they want payment or validation of your identity and they appear very friendly, as if they are "helping you out". The fraudster will instruct you not to contact your financial institution and keep you on the phone for hours. Our customers are sharing with us that the fraudster is requesting payment by gift cards or credit card. They may request downloading an app to "further assist"; these apps give the fraudster access to your device where they then obtain sensitive information.

Financial damage to our customers has been reported in the thousands of dollars. These payment methods are often untraceable, allowing the fraudster to disappear. Our hope is to bring attention to these scams and alert consumers to be extremely cautious with their personal information.

Denali State Bank is a locally owned and operated full-service community bank based in Fairbanks, Alaska. Please don't hesitate to contact Andra Lozano and/or Steve Lundgren, President & CEO, with questions or to request additional information regarding this important consumer protection issue occurring within our community.

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