

For Immediate Release



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To Banking or Business Editor:

Would You Bank Here?



September 30, 2013: This self storage facility in Fort Lauderdale, Florida was the address used by two fraudulent “banks” in the past two months.

On August 16th, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) issued an alert to all U.S. banks and their regulators warning that **Freedom 1st National Bank**, a fictitious entity, was using this address as its base. Allegedly, Bradford C. Ege, II, solicited individuals with poor credit, telling them he could provide them with a semi-secure credit card. All they had to do was send a check to this address and he would issue a credit card that would help them rebuild their credit. The checks ranged from \$500—\$900 per victim; the credit cards never arrived.

Fast forward to September 25th. The OCC issued another alert. All details were exactly the same with two exceptions. 1) the fictitious bank is now **AmTrade International Bank** instead of Freedom 1st National Bank, and 2) there is no mention of Bradford C. Ege, II. All other details are identical.



Would You Bank Here? - Continued

Individuals with poor credit were solicited and told the bank could provide them with a semi-secure credit card. All they had to do was send a check to this address and a credit card would be issued in the victim's name to help the person rebuild their credit. The checks ranged from \$500—\$900 per victim. Again, the checks were cashed, but the credit cards never arrived.

Variations on schemes like this pop up now and again and it is up to the consumer to protect him or herself. The OCC advises using caution when responding to unsolicited correspondence, particularly if it is requesting funds of any kind. **BAUERFINANCIAL** has the tools you need to exercise that caution. You can check out any bank's star-rating online at www.bauerfinancial.com; the star-ratings are always free of charge on the website.

BAUERFINANCIAL has been providing the public with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions regarding their banking relationships since 1983. **BAUERFINANCIAL** is the source that bankers and consumers trust when making important banking decisions. Let's face it, when it comes to money, all decisions are important.

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