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## Economic Affairs Interim Committee

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### 59th Montana Legislature

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March 9, 2006

Janet Kelly, Director  
Department of Administration  
PO Box 200101  
Helena MT 59620-0101

Dear Ms. Kelly:

At its February 2006 meeting the Economic Affairs Interim Committee voted to send a letter to the Department of Administration urging the Department to work with its insurance vendors to remove social security numbers from state employee health insurance cards as quickly as possible. The Economic Affairs Interim Committee is making this request as part of its study on identity theft prevention and mitigation, required under Senate Joint Resolution No. 38.

As you know, the social security number in and of itself is considered a personal identifier that in the hands of an identity thief is sufficient to wreak financial havoc for the person whose social security number is illegally used. The more prevalent the availability of a social security number, the more opportunity there is for an identity thief.

This letter is a specific request in a broader effort by the Economic Affairs Interim Committee to raise awareness about the inappropriate use of social security numbers or the failure to encrypt or truncate social security numbers when their use is legitimate.

Connie Welsh and Mike Boyer in your Department have attended meetings of the identity theft working group and have been helpful in describing the various uses and protections for social security numbers. They are aware of the Economic Affairs Interim Committee's concerns. If the Department could speed up the use of an alternate identifier or at the very least truncate the social security number when it is used on the health insurance card, this may be helpful in preventing identity theft.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Representative Jim Keane, chair  
Economic Affairs Interim Committee

cc: Connie Welsh  
Mike Boyer  
CI2196 6068pmxa.