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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Governor JB Pritzker Urges Illinoisans to Take Steps to Stay Cyber Safe this October

Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology offers guidance and free resources to stay cyber safe during Cybersecurity Awareness Month

SPRINGFIELD – Governor JB Pritzker has proclaimed October as Cybersecurity Awareness Month in Illinois, and the Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT) is encouraging residents to take simple, proactive steps to strengthen their online safety and protect personal information.

"Keeping Illinoisans safe online depends not just on having strong guardrails in place but also identifying and preventing cyber-attacks before they occur," **said Governor JB Pritzker**. "Cybersecurity Awareness Month serves as a helpful reminder to be diligent, cautious, and proactive when navigating digital spaces. Now with the growth of AI, it is essential to prepare residents with the knowledge and resources to remain protected from rapidly evolving automated cyber-attacks."

Recognizing the critical importance of cybersecurity, state officials are committed to providing the necessary tools and information to help residents protect themselves. This initiative aims to empower individuals with the knowledge and resources needed to navigate the digital landscape securely.

"Cybersecurity awareness matters most when it becomes action," **said Jason Bowen, Statewide Chief Information Security Officer**. "When people secure their accounts, keep devices updated, question unexpected requests, and report concerns quickly, they create layers of protection that make are entire State stronger."

To further assist residents in understanding and implementing cybersecurity measures, DoIT has compiled a list of practical tips and guidelines. These resources are designed to help individuals safeguard their personal information and reduce the risk of cyber threats.

How can I keep my data safe?

- Protecting your accounts is the single most important thing you can do to keep your data safe.
 - Enable two-factor authentication whenever possible.
 - For passwords - consider making them complex (upper, lowercase, numbers, symbols) and longer passwords are stronger passwords.
 - Use a unique password for each account.
 - Avoid using known information about you in your passwords.
- Keep your Internet browser and operating system up to date with the latest versions.

- Be cautious about any online offers.
- Monitor your online bank and credit accounts for unauthorized or suspicious spending.
- Talk with your family about the importance of cybersecurity.

What is phishing?

Phishing is a technique used to get your personal information by email, websites, or phone. Phishing is an attempt to dishonestly gather personal information from you or to install malicious software on your device.

To avoid becoming a victim of phishing:

- If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is.
- Delete emails asking for personal information and block the sender.
- Do not visit websites that may attempt to install malicious software.
- Never give personal information to anyone over the phone or online.

For more cybersecurity tips, visit www.ready.gov/cybersecurity.

Governor JB Pritzker's Proclamation is attached and more information can also be found at doit.illinois.gov.

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