

DEPARTMENT OF CORPORATIONS*Business Services and Consumer and Investor Protection***JAN LYNN OWEN****California Corporations Commissioner****MEDIA RELEASE****For Immediate Release**

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**STATE AGENCIES HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF
FINANCIAL LITERACY DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL**

SACRAMENTO, CA – The Department of Corporations (DOC), Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) and the Department of Real Estate (DRE) will partner with other state, federal and local government agencies and financial literacy organizations to educate consumers during the 12th Annual California Financial Literacy Month in April. This coordinated education campaign encourages individuals throughout the state to take full advantage of free resources designed to improve financial literacy and increase decision making power.

This year's theme – "Helping Californians Make Informed Financial Decisions" – highlights the importance of making well-informed financial decisions to achieve financial goals.

"Events of the last few years have highlighted the need for financial literacy for all consumers," said DOC Commissioner Jan Lynn Owen. "I hope all Californians take this opportunity to enhance their financial awareness."

"Consumer need to be well equipped to make financial decisions," said Teveia R. Barnes, Commissioner of DFI. "The consequences of mistakes can be devastating. California Financial Literacy Month is an opportunity to learn more about economics and finance."

"Financial literacy and consumer education are going to be key factors in applying the lessons learned from the real estate market meltdown," said Bill Moran, DRE Acting Deputy Commissioner. "Financial literacy is very important and informed consumers can more easily avoid the pitfalls of the past."

During California Financial Literacy Month, DOC, DFI, DRE and its partners are promoting free resources to help consumers manage money, credit, investments, and debt and to also learn ways to avoid fraud. Regardless of age or financial situation, there are important and useful lessons to learn about financial responsibility.

The three state agencies encourage everyone to make an effort to seek information about products, compare the costs and fees of financial products and services and read and understand the "fine print" before signing a contract.

Participating organizations are reaching out with social media using Twitter, Facebook and Blogs to reach a larger audience with tips on saving, investing and credit, and protecting ourselves from fraud and identity theft. With social media, visitors can discover resources in an informal and interactive environment. This also provides the opportunity for consumers to connect directly with representatives of regulatory agencies and consumer protection organizations.

About Department of Corporations - DOC is California's investment and financing authority and is responsible for the regulation, enforcement, and licensing of securities, franchises, off-exchange commodities, investment and financial services, independent escrows, consumer and commercial finance lending, residential mortgage lending, and payday lenders. Contact our toll-free consumer resource center at 1-866-ASK-CORP (275-2677) for information or to obtain a consumer complaint form. Website: www.corp.ca.gov

About Department of Financial Institutions - The DFI oversees the secure operation of California's state-chartered financial institutions. California's financial institutions are symbols of safety and soundness. Protecting and serving California's citizens through effective regulation and supervision remains the primary mission of the DFI. DFI ensures public confidence in financial institutions by protecting the interests of depositors, borrowers, shareholders and consumers through enforcement of state laws. Website: www.dfi.ca.gov

About Department of Real Estate – DRE is a consumer protection agency that licenses and regulates real estate agents and brokers, investigate real estate fraud and facilitate the administration and enforcement of the Real Estate Law and the Subdivided Lands Law. DRE's mission is to safeguard and promote the public's interests in real estate matters. Website: www.dre.ca.gov

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