



**DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE**

DATE: July 25, 2001

FROM: U.S. Secret Service – Financial Crimes Division

TO: The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) for immediate national dissemination to all member financial institutions

SUBJECT: FRAUD PREVENTION REGARDING THE ISSUANCE OF THE TAX RELIEF TREASURY CHECKS

The Tax Relief Act has directed the U.S. Department of Treasury to issue tax credit payments to taxpayers. This event could act as a catalyst for mail theft of these checks and the subsequent forgery or alteration of payment amount.

Financial Institutions and others who negotiate U.S. Treasury Checks should note the following:

- The Tax Relief check will differ from a traditional IRS tax refund Treasury check. (Look for the phrase "Tax Relief for America's Workers," which will be printed across the front of these checks)
- No Tax Relief check should be greater than \$600. If you see a larger amount, suspect fraud.
- When accepting any U.S. Treasury checks, pay close attention to the amount of the check to discern whether the amount has been changed through alteration.
- If you suspect criminal activity regarding U.S. Treasury checks, please contact your local law enforcement agency.
- As always, obtain proper identification from the payee.

All check cashing entities are encouraged to exercise increased vigilance and should review the U.S. Treasury's criteria and their own respective check cashing policy regarding proper acceptance/cashing of U.S. Treasury obligations and instruments.