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Franchot: Crackdown on Tax Scheme Yields \$3.5 million for the State

Annapolis, MD (December 17, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot announced today that a major corporation has paid over \$3.5 million to the state as the result of his agency's aggressive enforcement of Maryland's tax laws. This is the second check resulting from a change – initiated by Franchot – in the way so-called "captive" Real Estate Investment Trusts (REIT) are treated for taxation purposes.

Comptroller Franchot Claims Another Victory Against Corporate Tax Scofflaws

Annapolis, MD (October 27, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot announced today that subsidiaries of the popular retail chain Nordstrom, Inc. were found liable to Maryland for corporate income taxes due from tax years 2002 and 2003. The Maryland Tax Court ordered Nordstrom to pay the state \$1,264,864 in back taxes plus interest and ten percent in penalties. This case was the most recent victory for the Comptroller's office in an aggressive effort to crack down on corporations avoiding taxes using Delaware Holding Company tax schemes and other tax avoidance strategies. To date, the Comptroller's office has collected more than \$267 million in taxes through Delaware Holding Company cases, and has an additional \$143 million in outstanding assessments against corporations using this tax-avoidance system.

Franchot: Crackdown on Tax Schemes Yields \$12m Talbots, Other Major Company to Pay

Annapolis, MD (October 13, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot announced today that two major corporations are paying nearly \$12 million to the state in avoided taxes as the result of his agency's aggressive enforcement of Maryland's tax laws, including the first settlement ever from a change - initiated by Franchot - in the way so-called "captive" Real Estate Investment Trusts are treated for taxation purposes.

Comptroller Franchot Reminds Taxpayers of October 15 Extension Deadline

ANNAPOLIS, MD (October 10, 2008)- Comptroller Peter Franchot today reminded taxpayers who received a six month extension on their 2007 personal income tax returns, to file by Wednesday's deadline. About 70,000 extension returns are expected to be filed this year by October 15.

Wet Weather Doesn't Wash Away Finders of Lost Money at Calvert County Fair

ANNAPOLIS, MD (September 30, 2008) - Staff of Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot's unclaimed property unit visited the Calvert County Fair, reuniting 21 people with more than \$13,000 in unclaimed funds. One lucky fairgoer found \$6,594.

Comptroller Franchot Receives Top Honor in Accounting and Financial Reporting

ANNAPOLIS, MD (September 29, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot, the state's chief financial officer, has been awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in financial reporting. The prestigious award was given to Franchot by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), of the United States and Canada, for Maryland's fiscal year 2007 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting.

Franchot, Gansler and Kopp Warn Marylanders of Scam Using Fake State-Issued Checks

ANNAPOLIS, MD (September 24, 2008) - Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot, Attorney General Douglas Gansler and Treasurer Nancy Kopp today joined together to warn Marylanders of scams involving fraudulent checks that appear to be issued by the State of Maryland.

Dozens of County Residents Find Money at The Frederick Fair

ANNAPOLIS, MD (September 22, 2008) - Staff of Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot's unclaimed property unit visited the Great Frederick County Fair, reuniting 55 people with more than \$21,000 in unclaimed funds. One lucky fairgoer found \$6,497.

Anne Arundel County Fair Nets Big Money for Local Residents

ANNAPOLIS, MD (September 15, 2008) - Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot's Unclaimed Property Booth visited the Anne Arundel County Fair, reuniting 19 people with over \$10,000 in unclaimed funds. Comptroller employees were at the Fair from Wednesday, September 10 until Sunday, September 14 as part of a statewide initiative to help reunite Marylanders with money they are owed. Fair attendees were able to check Comptroller files for their names to see if they had any unclaimed property. So far this year, the Comptroller Office has been able to reunite 669 Marylanders with \$290,085 at county and state fairs.

Comptroller Franchot Further Extends Tax Filing Deadline, "Hurricane Ike" Disaster Area

Annapolis, MD (September 19, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today extended the tax filing and payment deadline to January 5, 2009, for individuals and businesses in the Gulf Coast affected by "Hurricane Ike."

Comptroller Franchot Extends Estimated Tax Filing Deadline for Businesses Affected by "Hurricane Ike"

Annapolis, MD (September 17, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today approved a 7-day filing extension for individuals and businesses in the Gulf Coast affected by "Hurricane Ike." The third-quarter estimated taxes were originally due to the State of Maryland on Monday, September 15. However, those in the affected region have until Monday, September 22 at midnight to fulfill their filing requirements.

Comptroller Franchot Lifts Gasoline Pressure Requirements to Increase Supply

ANNAPOLIS, MD (Sept. 18, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot, mindful of the lingering impact of Hurricane Ike on oil refineries in the Gulf region, today announced that gasoline with a vapor pressure up to 13.5 psi (pounds per square inch) may now be sold, in addition to 11.5 psi gas.

Statement of Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot Regarding the Anne Arundel County Circuit Court Ruling on Slots Wednesday, September 10, 2008

"The Anne Arundel County Circuit Court ruling is a victory for the voters of Maryland who deserve a fair and honest presentation of this significant change in Maryland's constitution. The Court recognized that putting a former slots lobbyist in charge of writing a constitutional amendment results in biased language - language that must be changed to ensure that the public knows the truth when going to the polls this November.

Comptroller Franchot Statement on Latest Revenue Estimates

ANNAPOLIS, MD (September 9, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot issues the following statement regarding the newest revenue estimates released this morning by the Board of Revenue Estimates:

'Ten Best Days of Summer' Nets Big Money for Hundreds of Marylanders

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (September 8, 2008) - More than 500 people found over \$290,000 in unclaimed funds at Comptroller Peter Franchot's booth at the Maryland State Fair. Comptroller employees were at the fair this year as part of a statewide initiative to help reunite Marylanders with money they are owed.

Franchot Urges Comprehensive Spending Reform; Blue Ribbon Panel to Conduct Top-To-Bottom Review

Annapolis, MD (September 8, 2008) - In a letter to the Governor and legislative leaders today, Comptroller Peter Franchot called for a comprehensive review of state spending as Maryland continues to face a lingering budget shortfall. With families feeling the effects of record tax and utility rate hikes, increased gas and food prices and falling home values, Franchot urged the state to tighten its own belt by establishing a Blue-ribbon Panel on Spending Reform to conduct a top-to-bottom review of expenditures and ensure taxpayers are getting the most for their dollar. Franchot, a member of the state's Capital Debt Affordability Committee, also expressed his opposition to raising Maryland's debt ceiling as a way to increase government spending.

Comptroller, City Police Seize Illegal Slot Machines

Annapolis, Md. (September 5, 2008) - Enforcement agents for Comptroller Peter Franchot in conjunction with Baltimore City Police recently seized five video gaming machines from two businesses after observing illegal activity during routine inspections. In June, Franchot announced that his enforcement agents will begin inspecting for gambling violations in establishments with liquor licenses in a new effort to crackdown on the proliferation of electronic gaming machines across Maryland.

Statement of Comptroller Franchot Regarding the State Board of Elections Rejection of Revised Ballot Language

ANNAPOLIS, MD (August 28, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot issues the following statement regarding the State Board of Elections rejection of revised ballot language:

Statement of Comptroller Franchot Regarding the Fiscal Year 2008 Closeout Figures

ANNAPOLIS, MD (August 28, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot issues the following statement regarding the final closeout out numbers for Fiscal Year 2008:

Comptroller Franchot, State Legislators Urge Residents to Apply for MD Property Tax Credit

Brentwood, MD (August 19, 2008) - With a weakening economy and foreclosure rates on the rise in Maryland, Comptroller Peter Franchot today joined Delegates Doyle Niemann, Victor Ramirez, Jolene Ivey and State Senator David Harrington at a senior center in Brentwood to urge residents to take advantage of the State Homeowners' Property Tax Credit, a program designed to provide tax relief to seniors and others on limited or fixed incomes.

Franchot Gives Back Nearly 60K at MoCo Fair

ANNAPOLIS, MD (August 19, 2008) - Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot's Unclaimed Property Booth visited the Montgomery County Fair last week, reuniting 126 people with over \$59,000 in unclaimed funds. Comptroller employees were at the Montgomery County Fair from Friday, August 8 until Saturday, August 16 as part of a statewide initiative to help reunite Marylanders with money they are owed. Fair attendees were able to check Comptroller files for their names to see if they had any unclaimed property.

Comptroller Franchot, Local Business Owners Promote MD Commuter Tax Credit

Annapolis, MD (August 11, 2008) - As a part of his agency's overall commitment to protect consumers at the gas pump, Comptroller Peter Franchot today joined with Montgomery County officials and businesses leaders to urge Maryland businesses who cover the transportation costs of their employees to take advantage of the State Commuter Tax Credit.

Comptroller Franchot, Fire Officials, and Elected Leaders Celebrate New Fire Safe Cigarette Law

Annapolis, MD (August 7, 2008) - Emphasizing his support for public safety and his commitment to protecting Maryland consumers, Comptroller Peter Franchot today joined with firefighters and public officials to celebrate the implementation of Maryland's fire safe cigarette law. The Comptroller highlighted the Maryland Cigarette Fire Safety Performance Standard and Firefighter Protection Act (HB 785) Chapter 497 of the Acts of Maryland (2007) at events in Silver Spring and Baltimore. The new law went into effect July 1, 2008.

Comptroller Franchot Gives Back Over \$3000 at Allegany County Fair

ANNAPOLIS, MD (July 30, 2008) - Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot's Unclaimed Property Booth visited the Allegany County Fair last week, reuniting four people with over \$3000 in unclaimed funds. Comptroller employees were at the Allegany County Fair and Agricultural Expo from Monday, July 21 until Saturday, July 26 as part of a statewide initiative to help reunite Marylanders with money they are owed. Fair attendees were able to check Comptroller files for their names to see if they had any unclaimed property.

Comptroller Franchot, Balt. CASH & AARP Urge Eligible Seniors, Veterans to File for Stimulus Relief

Annapolis, MD (July 28, 2008) - With people feeling the ever-increasing pinch from the national economic slowdown, Comptroller Peter Franchot, the Baltimore CASH Campaign and AARP Maryland today urged the nearly 100,000 of eligible Maryland seniors and veterans who have not yet claimed their federal economic stimulus payments to do so. This announcement coincides with the beginning of a three-week outreach campaign by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which is sending information packets to remaining individuals on how to receive their checks.

Comptroller's Unclaimed Property Booth Coming to a Fair Near You

Annapolis, MD (July 10, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced that employees of his office will be setting up booths this summer at events throughout the state to allow people to check his office's files of unclaimed property. This outreach effort will stretch until mid-November, and will include stops at eight county fairs and at the Maryland State Fair.

Comptroller Franchot Calls for Greater Inclusion in Management of State Pension Assets

CHICAGO (June 30, 2008) - This morning, Comptroller Peter Franchot joined with Reverend Jesse Jackson, former Senator Carol Moseley Braun (D-IL), Congressman John Conyers (D-MI) and corporate leaders at the 2008 Rainbow PUSH Coalition Conference in Chicago to discuss ways to increase the number of minority asset/investment managers participating in corporate and public pension funds across the country.

Franchot Calls for Significant Investment of State Pension Funds into Life Sciences

SAN DIEGO, CA (June 19, 2008) - At a gathering of the world's leading life science and biotech companies, Comptroller Peter Franchot today advocated for a major investment of state pension fund assets into Maryland's renowned life sciences industry. The Comptroller, who serves as Vice-Chairman of the State Retirement and Pension System of Maryland, called for the action at the 2008 BIO International Conference 2008ly being held in San Diego, CA.

Comptroller Franchot Announces New Crackdown on Electronic Gaming Machines

ANNAPOLIS, MD (June 17, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot announced today that his enforcement agents will begin to inspect for gambling violations in establishments with liquor licenses in a new effort to crackdown on the proliferation of electronic gaming machines across Maryland. These devices look and function like slot machines, which are 2008ly illegal.

Comptroller Franchot Receives Distinguished Award for Leadership on MBE Issues

Annapolis, MD (June 13, 2008) - In recognition of his commitment to expanding opportunity for Maryland's minority and women owned businesses, Comptroller Peter Franchot was honored with "The Most Distinguished Person in Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Award by the Maryland Washington Minority Contractors' Association (MWMCA) at its Fifth Annual Spring Breakfast.

Comptroller Franchot Praises Deputy's Election to Distinguished National Leadership Post

Annapolis, MD (June 11, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced the election of Deputy Comptroller Linda Tanton as president of the Federation of Tax Administrators (FTA). Tanton was elected by a vote of her peers at the group's 2008 annual meeting in Philadelphia, Pa. Franchot praised Tanton's leadership as a key member of his senior staff and recognized her many accomplishments in making the Comptroller's Office a national leader in the field of state tax administration.

Comptroller Agents Bust Cigarette Smuggler on I-495

Annapolis, MD (June 9, 2008) - Agents for Comptroller Peter Franchot confiscated more than 1,900 packs of contraband cigarettes and arrested a suspected smuggler on Saturday, June 7, on Interstate 495 in Prince George's County.

Comptroller Franchot Warns Taxpayers of 'Mystery Shopper' Check Scam

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Monday, June 9, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today warned Maryland taxpayers about a scam involving fraudulent state checks. A taxpayer, receiving a phony Maryland check and letter from The Shopping Group, alerted the agency to the con.

Comptroller Agents Confiscate Contraband Cigs from Repeat Offender

Annapolis, MD (June 2, 2008) - Enforcement agents for Comptroller Peter Franchot arrested a convicted cigarette smuggler again on Saturday, May 31, confiscating more than 4,800 packs of contraband cigarettes on U.S. 13 North in Worcester County.

Comptroller Peter Franchot Applauds Signing of Kids First Act and Maryland Funding Accountability & Transparency Act

Annapolis, MD (May 22, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot issued the following statement regarding the signing of House Bills 1391 and 358:

Statement of Comptroller Peter Franchot Applauding Signing of Maryland Tax Preparers Act and Bill to Expand Minority Business Opportunities

Annapolis, MD (May 22, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot issued the following statement regarding the signing of Senate Bills 817 and 606:

Comptroller Agents Confiscate Contraband Cigs on I-95 Thanks to State Police Tip

Annapolis, MD (May 6, 2008) - Agents for Comptroller Peter Franchot, in conjunction with a Maryland State Police (MSP) officer, made an arrest yesterday confiscating more than 3,700 packs of contraband cigarettes on Interstate 95 in Cecil County.

Comptroller Franchot's Office Wins Major Tax Case; Talbots Ordered to Pay More than \$1 Million

Annapolis, MD (April 17, 2008) - Emphasizing his commitment to eliminate corporate tax avoidance, Comptroller Peter Franchot announced today that Classics Chicago, a subsidiary of Talbots, Inc., was found liable to Maryland for their corporation income tax for 11 years from 1993 to 2003. The Maryland Tax Court ordered Classics to pay the state \$1,092,336.00 in back taxes along with interest and ten percent in penalties. This case was the most recent victory for the Comptroller's office in an aggressive effort to crack down on corporations avoiding taxes using Delaware Holding Company tax schemes. To date, the Comptroller's office has collected \$267 million

in taxes through Delaware Holding Company cases, and has an additional \$145 million in outstanding assessments against corporations using this tax-avoidance system.

Comptroller Franchot Extends Filing Deadline for Eastern Shore Counties Affected by Internet Outage

Annapolis, MD (April 16, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today approved a filing extension for Marylanders who live in the Eastern Shore counties affected by an internet outage that occurred on the evening of April 15 and were unable to electronically file their Maryland income tax return. The extended deadline, only for those filing their Maryland income tax return electronically, is Thursday, April 17 at midnight.

Franchot, Consumer Advocates Urge Governor to Sign Maryland Tax Preparers Act

Silver Spring, MD (April 11, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today joined with state lawmakers, consumer protection advocates and tax advocacy groups to urge Governor Martin O'Malley to sign the Maryland Individual Tax Preparers Act, legislation to protect consumers against shady tax preparers and predatory lenders. The bill, passed by the General Assembly on Monday, creates a State Board of Individual Tax Preparers that would help protect taxpayers against unscrupulous tax preparers and allow the State to track problem preparers.

Franchot Pulls Draft "Tech Tax" Regulations from Website; Applauds Efforts that led to Repeal

Annapolis, MD (April 8, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced that he was taking down the draft regulations for the proposed computer services tax and applauded the efforts of everyone who worked diligently to have the tax repealed. An early and consistent supporter of repealing the "tech tax," the Comptroller congratulated the state's computer services industry for organizing an effective advocacy campaign and applauded the Governor and the legislative leaders for taking appropriate action.

Franchot Highlights Productive and Successful 2008 Session

Annapolis, MD (April 8, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today expressed satisfaction for a very productive and successful 2008 legislative session. Most of the Comptroller's top legislative priorities, including approval and funding for an innovative new tax compliance program, the repeal of the computer services tax, the passing of the Maryland Tax Preparers Act, crucial corporate income tax reform, and legislation providing critical rights to domestic partners all passed through the General Assembly this year. The Comptroller praised the Governor and the General Assembly for their work during the 2008 legislative session, but expressed disappointment that the move to ban electronic gaming devices across the state left a gaping loophole for illicit activity to continue in Baltimore County and Baltimore City.

More than \$46 Million Up for Grabs in 2008 Unclaimed Property Supplement

ANNAPOLIS, MD (April 1, 2008)- Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced that his office will issue an 80-page advertising supplement over the next three weeks to find 66,387 recently-identified owners of more than \$46 million in unclaimed funds. The supplement will appear in 28 newspapers throughout the state, beginning tomorrow and running through Thursday, April 17.

Comptroller Franchot Announces One Millionth Electronic Filer

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Monday, March 31, 2008) Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced that his office received its 1 millionth electronically filed personal income tax return this year from a former teacher and Baltimore City resident.

Comptroller Names Top 50 Tax Scofflaws

ANNAPOLIS, MD (March 26, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced the names of 25 businesses and 25 individuals owing more than \$6.2 million in unpaid taxes, penalties and interest. His "Caught in the Web" program lists the names of these scofflaws on the agency's Web site, www.marylandtaxes.com.

Comptroller Franchot Tells Last Minute Filers to "Remain Calm," Offers Tips For Easy Filing

Annapolis, MD (March 21, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot reminded taxpayers today about the approaching April 15 tax filing deadline and offered tips for last-minute filers.

Comptroller Agents & ATF Official Confiscate Contraband Cigs on I-495

Annapolis, MD (March 7, 2008) - Agents for Comptroller Peter Franchot, in conjunction with an agent from the Richmond office of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), made an arrest yesterday confiscating over 1,600 packs of contraband cigarettes on Interstate 495 in Prince George's County.

Comptroller's Agents Stop Illegal Fuel Shipment

Annapolis, MD (February 26, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced that agents from his Field Enforcement Division confiscated a 2006 International Tractor and AIM Tanker Trailer along with its contents of 7,500 gallons of ultra low sulfur untaxed highway diesel as it was about to be unloaded at a Washington County trucking company. The vehicle and its contents are valued in excess of \$125,000 and would have represented a motor fuel tax loss to the State of Maryland of \$1,818.75.

Franchot Wins National Award for Fiscal Excellence and Leadership

Annapolis, MD (February 11, 2008) - In recognition of his work as the fiscal watchdog for the taxpayers of Maryland, cracking down on tax cheats, cigarette smuggles, illegal alcohol and motor fuel sales, closing corporate tax loopholes and launching the first-in-the-nation program to ensure that federal contractors are paying their fair share in state taxes, the Association of Government Accountants (AGA) today announced that Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot has been chosen as a 2008 William R. Snodgrass Distinguished Leadership award recipient.

Free tax preparation sites open city-wide

Baltimore, MD (February 5, 2008) - Congressman Elijah Cummings, Mayor Sheila Dixon, Comptroller Peter Franchot, and City Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake announced the availability of free community tax services for low-income working families in Baltimore at a press conference on February 5, 2008.

Comptroller & Maryland EIC Campaign Celebrate 2nd National Earned Income Tax Credit Day

Annapolis, MD (January 31, 2008) - Participating alongside of federal, state and local organizations from across the country, Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot and members of the Maryland EIC Campaign today celebrated the second annual "National Earned Income Tax Credit Day" by reiterating their shared goal of raising awareness of this important anti-poverty tool as the 2008 tax filing season begins.

Franchot Cracks Down on Motor Fuel Tax Violators

Annapolis, MD (January 23, 2008) - Reaffirming his commitment to enforce all of Maryland's tax laws to ensure everyone pays their fair share, Comptroller Peter Franchot announced today that agents from his Field Enforcement Division recently investigated and cited seven individuals for fuel tax violations.

Franchot Offers Bleak Assessment of Economy

Bethesda, MD (January 18, 2008) - Emphasizing his independence and prudent fiscal stewardship, Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot today offered a bleak assessment of the State's economic outlook, urged fiscal restraint and called for the repeal of the recently enacted sales tax on computer services. Fulfilling his constitutional mandate to report to the General Assembly on the financial health of the State, the Comptroller spoke to an audience of Maryland business, civic and political leaders in downtown Bethesda and warned of the negative impact the recently enacted tax package and a shaky economy could have on Maryland's families.

Comptroller Franchot Honors State's Top E-Filers

Annapolis, MD (January 17, 2008) - In an effort to acknowledge Maryland tax preparers who file their clients' income tax returns electronically, Comptroller Peter Franchot today honored 24 tax preparation services that recently implemented the use of e-File for their clients. One tax preparer from each county and Baltimore City, who recently implemented the E-File system when filing tax returns, was selected to receive this award as a result of filing the highest volume of electronic returns for tax year 2006. A total number of 1,383,289 tax returns were filed electronically for tax year 2006, of which 887,827 of them were filed by commercial tax preparers. Overall, there was a 9.71% increase from 2005 to 2006 in electronic filing.

Comptroller's Office and SDAT Inform Ground Rent Owners to Register Properties

Annapolis, MD (January 17, 2008) - Comptroller Peter Franchot's Office, in conjunction with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT), today briefed the House of Delegate's Environmental Matters Committee on their recent efforts to inform Marylanders of the newly implemented statewide Ground Rent Registration System.

Comptroller Franchot Mails 1099G Forms to Taxpayers

Annapolis, MD (January 15, 2008) - Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot today announced that his office began mailing the 1099G Form to Maryland taxpayers who itemized deductions on their federal income tax return last year and received a refund from the State. From January 14 thru January 31, over 1.4 million 1099G Forms will be disseminated to taxpayers across the state at a rate of approximately 106,500 forms per day.

Comptroller Agents & ATF Officials Confiscate Contraband Cigs on I-95

Annapolis, MD (January 10, 2008) - Agents for Comptroller Peter Franchot, in conjunction with agents of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), yesterday made two arrests and confiscated over 13,000 packs of contraband cigarettes on Interstate 95 in Prince George's County.

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