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October 29, 2026

National Governors Association
444 North Capitol Street NW #267
Washington, D.C. 20001

State Financial Officers Foundation
13851 W 63rd St Ste 405
Shawnee, KS 66216

Dear National Governors Association and State Financial Officers Foundation,

Recently, Vice President Vance called on every American to sign his pledge to protect our country from fraudsters[1]. Getting public officials on the record is an important step in holding our government accountable for actually stopping the improper payments and fraudsters who cost taxpayers upwards of $521 billion dollars a year[2], or $1.4 billion a day.

I was glad to see twenty-two governors and numerous other state financial officials sign this pledge. But every single governor and public official should sign the pledge. Fighting fraud should be a bipartisan issue, and one carried out at every level of government, utilizing every tool at our disposal.

While a public pledge is a great way to show support for efforts to fight fraud, taxpayers need concrete actions to ensure their dollars are spent as intended rather than on the mansions and luxury cars of fraudsters[3]. One such tool the Department of Treasury has deployed to stop fraud is the Do Not Pay system[4], which helped prevent, detect, and recover $11.7 billion in fraudulent and improper payments in FY2025 alone.

In March 2020, Congress enacted the Payment Integrity Improvement Act to ensure all federal awards and payments are screened against the Do Not Pay system. The law also authorized all states, territories, and federally recognized tribes to use the Do Not Pay system. The United States Department of Treasury has used this authority to open partnerships with states by giving

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[1] Vance, J. D. [@JDVance]. " [Post on X]." X, https://x.com/JDVance/status/2110752082399555799. Accessed 20 Oct. 2026.
[2] U.S. Government Accountability Office. Fraud and Improper Payments: Data Quality and a Skilled Workforce Are Essential for Realizing Artificial Intelligence's Benefits. GAO-26-108850, 13 Jan. 2026, https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-26-108850.
[3] Ernst, Joni. "Ernst Investigation Reveals Fraudsters Becoming Billionaires by Bilking Taxpayers." U.S. Senator Joni Ernst, 29 Sept. 2026, https://www.ernst.senate.gov/news/press-releases/ernst-investigation-reveals-fraudsters-becoming-billionaires-by-bilking-taxpayers.
[4] U.S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of the Fiscal Service. "Do Not Pay." Bureau of the Fiscal Service, last updated 8 Apr. 2026, https://fiscal.treasury.gov/payment-integrity/do-not-pay-dnp.

them access to program integrity data hubs to help detect and deter improper payments by cross-matching state program enrollees. However, only 19 states currently use the Do Not Pay system for any of their state components or offices[5].

It is significantly easier to stop fraudulent and improper payments by preventing them from ever being made, rather than the "pay-and-chase" scheme that is the norm today.

Accordingly, I call on your organizations to encourage your members to enter partnerships with the United States Department of Treasury to utilize the Do Not Pay system to its fullest extent when disbursing and verifying the eligibility of funding to all recipients.

Additionally, please ask your members and provide answers to the following questions by November 27, 2026:

- Have you signed Vice President Vance's anti-fraud pledge? And if not, why?
- Do you agree fraud is a problem in government programs which wastes tax dollars and takes resources away from those who need them?
- Has your state already entered partnerships with the Department of Treasury to utilize the Do Not Pay system? If not, what are the barriers that have prevented you from doing so?

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your efforts to fight fraudsters and ensure the responsible use of taxpayer dollars. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions.

Sincerely,

Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator

[5] Lips, Dan. "More States Should Use This Tool to Prevent Fraud." City Journal, https://www.city-journal.org/article/do-not-pay-data-screening-tool-fraud. Accessed 20 Oct. 2026.