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State Unveils Enhancement to Web Based Tax Services

Changes will help more taxpayers file online and check the status of refunds.

Dover – Delaware Secretary of Finance David Singleton, Lieutenant Governor John Carney and Chief Information Officer Thomas Jarrett jointly announced the launch of important enhancements to Internet-based tax services and information currently offered by the Delaware Division of Revenue.

The announcement showcases the use of new voice technology to allow citizens to access tax information, currently available on the Internet, through a toll free telephone number -- **866-276-2353**. Through this number, taxpayers can access a suite of tax related services and information. For example, any Delaware taxpayer can access information on the status of their tax refund. Taxpayers who have not yet filed can locate a facility in their neighborhood where they can obtain free Internet access and file their taxes electronically.

“The services and information the Division of Revenue provides through its web site are critical to taxpayers,” said Secretary Singleton. “We know that thousands of Delaware taxpayers use these services. In fact, Delaware has one of the highest rates for online tax filing in the entire country.”

Online tax filing provides benefits for taxpayers because it results in quicker refunds and is less prone to calculation errors and other mistakes. For the last several years, the Division of Revenue has offered online tax filing, and has also made available an application that allows taxpayers to check the status of their refund.

“The audience for these online tax services has traditionally been those citizens with Internet access -- about 50-60 percent of households on average,” said Lieutenant Governor John Carney. “With these new enhancements, the audience for these existing services will be extended to all households with telephone access -- about 95 percent on average. Improving government service by enhancing access to technology is a key objective of the Minner Administration”

These enhanced tax services are the latest initiative in a project being undertaken by the Department of Technology and Information. The **Access Delaware** Project is focused on providing alternative mechanisms for Delaware agencies to deliver information to citizens and taxpayers. Last November, in an earlier initiative of this project, State CIO Tom Jarrett and Election Commissioner Frank Calio joined Lieutenant Governor Carney to unveil a voice-enabled polling place locator.

“Internet access and the Digital Divide continue to be a challenge to States looking to provide services and information through the web,” said Delaware Chief Information Officer Thomas M. Jarrett, a former executive with Verizon. “With the advent of new voice-based technologies, which we are using as part of the Access Delaware project, a whole new avenue has opened up to provide citizens with access to government services.”

The enhancements to the Internet-based tax services offered by the Delaware Division of Revenue are based on a technology called VoiceXML – a brief overview of how this technology works can be found at http://www.state.de.us/dti/access_de.htm.

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