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Data breach is the latest in a disturbing trend of questionable DHS management

Thousands of Oregonians had their personal information exposed in January

SALEM, Oregon – Once again the Department of Human Services' failings are making headlines. This time the department that oversees protected health information for thousands suffered a data breach. Yet, nearly two months passed before DHS revealed that its system had been compromised, exposing social security numbers, birth dates and additional personal information. This risks identity theft and other criminal exploitation of this data.

In early January, nine employees opened phishing emails and clicked on a link that compromised their email accounts and allowed access to these employees' email information. That led to the access of nearly 2 million emails. Outside investigators confirmed the hack on Jan. 28. But rather than immediately alerting the public that their information may have been stolen, DHS chose to wait, allowing time for criminals to harm thousands of unwitting Oregonians.

"Transparency continues to be a systemic problem at DHS. Oregonians deserve better from government agencies and departments. Protection of personal information they are required to provide the state should be given the highest priority. Beyond that, we're seeing a growing accountability issue when DHS fails to quickly inform the public about embarrassing matters," said House Republican Leader Rep. Carl Wilson (R-Grants Pass).

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