

According to a report by the Federal Trade Commission, Florida ranks third in the nation in the number of identity theft complaints filed.

The [South Florida Business Journal](#) has more...

*Identity and other complaints of theft hit 57,472 in Florida in 2008. Of those, 24,440 complaints were related to identity theft. Credit card debt led that category, with 4,973 complaints.*

*Other identity theft related complaints include:*

- *Government documents or benefits fraud, 4,466*
- *Bank fraud, 3,135*
- *Employment-related fraud, 2,413*
- *Phone or utilities fraud, 2,327*
- *Loan fraud, 1,010*
- *Other, 6,199*
- *Attempted identity theft, 1,432*

*The states reporting the most complaints – Arizona, California and Florida – coincide with the states reporting the highest rates of foreclosure, demonstrating that the economic downturn has coincided with an upturn in fraud, according to Affinion Security Center, which provides personal data security services for consumers and businesses.*

**On Monday, March 23rd Gus will host a Identify Theft Prevention Seminar in Pasco County.** The event will run from 10:00 AM to Noon at the CARES Rao Musunuru M.D. Activity Center: 12417 Clock Tower Parkway, Hudson, FL 34667.

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In October of 2007 Gus sponsored two Consumer Fraud and Identity Theft Seminars featuring Federal Trade Commission (FTC) officials, prosecutors and members of the law enforcement community who discussed a host of identity theft and consumer fraud issues, including how to deter, detect and defend consumers and their families from consumer and identity theft crimes.

Gus even went as far as to create an Identity Theft Prevention Task Force which meets on a quarterly basis. The task force works to review current laws and legislation related to identity theft and will recommend future legislation as needed.

Task Force members bring with them the experience of a variety of government agencies, including the United States Secret Service, United States Postal Inspector's Office, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Attorney General's Office.

To learn more about ID theft please visit: [www.consumer.gov/idtheft](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft)