

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Seniors Fall Victim to Easy Credit Offers**

Senior adults are unfortunate targets of easy-credit offers which can trap them into mounting debt, according to [company].

[insert a customer's authorized personal story – optional]

It is not uncommon for seniors to receive 30 or more pre-approved credit card solicitations through the mail each year. Some include a check for \$5,000 to \$10,000 as an advance against their credit limit. All that is required is to deposit or cash the check. Simple enough until the payments are due.

“For many senior adults living on a fixed income with little savings and the need to pay medical expenses for an ailing spouse, higher housing costs, or rising day-to-day expenses, an offer of instant cash can seem like a blessing,” [insert your name, title at company], said. “But it can lead to big trouble!”

These offers take advantage of seniors by promoting a low introductory rate and then in the hard-to-read small print disclose that the rate will adjust up as high as 24%. All that most seniors can afford to pay each month is the minimum payment, with very little going to reduce the balance. Seniors can find themselves making payments the rest of their lives. So, what started off as a blessing quickly turns into a nightmare.

Households headed by someone 75 or older, with debt, increased substantially in 2004 to 40.3 percent from 29.0 percent in 2001, according to a recent study by the Employee Benefit Research Institute. This mounting debt is putting their ability to finance their remaining retirement at risk.

For many seniors, there is another option. A Federally-Insured Reverse Mortgage enables homeowners 62 and older to turn part of their home's value into immediate cash for any purpose and with no repayment for as long as they live in their home: a program designed to help seniors maintain their independence and stay in their home. Since there are no monthly payments, there is never any risk of losing the home. With five plans to select from, senior homeowners may customize their reverse mortgage to best meet their needs.

Unlike high-interest credit cards or consolidation loans, the reverse mortgage program offers a low interest rate. Past credit history and income are not used in qualifying for the program, and the money received is tax-free and does not affect Social Security or Medicare benefits. Seniors may use this money to pay off debts or an existing mortgage to eliminate the payments. Also, they may receive extra money they need for medical expenses, home repairs, or unexpected financial needs.

“Once senior adults start taking on credit card debt they quickly find themselves trapped. Their monthly payments decrease the money they have to live on, causing them to fall deeper and deeper into debt. Some even find themselves using one credit card to make the payments on another. With a reverse mortgage they have no monthly payments to worry with, so they are able to get the money they need without falling into a trap. Plus, seniors retain ownership and control of their home. It’s smart money for many senior homeowners!” [name] said.

For a free informational package on the reverse mortgage program, call [company] toll-free at [number] or visit [website].

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