



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Tuesday, May 25, 2010

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## **NEWS ALERT:** **LATIN LOTTO SCAM INCIDENTS STARTING AGAIN IN HOUSTON METROPOLITAN AREA**

(Austin)--The Texas Lottery® warns all residents of the Houston metropolitan area that Latin American scam artists are again nearby and using phony Texas Lottery tickets to scam victims of thousands of dollars.

Late Monday, the agency received information from a Houston-area woman who was nearly scammed out of \$60,000 by two Latin American women and one man who tried to sell her an allegedly “jackpot-winning” ticket. This was in Pasadena in the parking lot of a Dollar Store.

“The story is always the same and always untrue,” said Texas Lottery Executive Director Gary Grief. “The scam artists tell the would-be victims that they can’t cash a winning lottery ticket because they are not US citizens, and they need money immediately for a family emergency somewhere in South or Central America. They offer to ‘sell’ the lottery ticket to the victim for an amount allegedly below the prize amount. Good-natured souls try to help out, only to have their money stolen by the con artists who quickly disappear. Lottery tickets should be purchased only from authorized retailers, not from someone on the street with a sad story.”

Grief said if the story sounds too good to be true, then that should serve as a warning to get away from the con artists immediately and call the authorities.

For more information about the Texas Lottery, please visit the official Texas Lottery website at <http://www.txlottery.org>.

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