



## #BANKSNEVERASKTHAT NEWS RELEASE

**Bank of Cleveland Media Contact: Christy Goza**  
**ABA Media Contact: Sarah Grano, [sgrano@aba.com](mailto:sgrano@aba.com)**

### **Bank of Cleveland Joins ABA and Banks Across U.S. for #BanksNeverAskThat Anti-Phishing Campaign**

*America's banks join forces in coordinated, industry-wide campaign to protect consumers during National Cybersecurity Awareness Month*

Today Bank of Cleveland joined the American Bankers Association and banks across the nation to promote an industry-wide campaign educating consumers about the persistent threat of phishing scams. The FTC estimates that consumers lost \$5.8 billion to phishing and other fraud in 2021, an increase of more than 70% compared to 2020. To combat phishing, the #BanksNeverAskThat campaign uses attention-grabbing humor and other engaging content to empower consumers to identify bogus bank communications asking for sensitive information like their passwords and social security numbers.

“Phishing attempts are at an all-time high and scammers are targeting consumers from every direction—by text, phone and email,” said Paul Benda, senior vice president, operational risk and cybersecurity at ABA. “Education and awareness are key to helping consumers spot a scam, and with help from participating banks like Bank of Cleveland, we’re able to reach bank customers across the country so they can stay one step ahead of the scammers.”

Bank of Cleveland, along with more than 1,000 banks from across the U.S. and ABA, are kicking off this year’s updated campaign on Oct. 3 to mark the beginning of National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. Throughout the month Bank of Cleveland will make a social media splash with consumer tips to highlight common phishing schemes. Because cybersecurity education and fraud awareness can often be dull and forgettable to many consumers, the campaign is designed to be bright and bold with a bit of comedy.

“Do you prefer boxers or briefs? Do you believe in aliens?!” one of the campaign’s animated GIFs asks social media users. “Banks would never ask you these questions. Here’s another question a real bank would never ask: We’ve spotted some unusual activity on your account, can you please verify your username and password?”

The campaign’s short videos offer similarly ridiculous scenarios like wallpapering a room with cash, roasting marshmallows over a cash fire and recycling cash on garbage day. Consumers are directed to [BanksNeverAskThat.com](https://www.BanksNeverAskThat.com) where they will find an interactive game, videos, phishing red flags, tips and FAQs.

For more information about phishing scams and how to stop fraudsters in their tracks, visit [www.BanksNeverAskThat.com](https://www.BanksNeverAskThat.com).

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*Bank of Cleveland  
75 Bobby Taylor Ave  
Cleveland, TN 37311*