

Investors punish Equifax for massive data breach

September 8 2017, by The Associated Press



This July 21, 2012, photo shows Equifax Inc., offices in Atlanta. Credit monitoring company Equifax says a breach exposed social security numbers and other data from about 143 million Americans. The Atlanta-based company said Thursday, Sept. 7, 2017, that "criminals" exploited a U.S. website application to access files between mid-May and July of this year. (AP Photo/Mike Stewart)

Investors were bailing out on Equifax a day after the credit monitoring company said a [data breach exposed](#) the Social Security numbers and

other personal data of 143 million Americans.

Equifax shares fell about 13 percent to \$123.75 in heavy trading. The decline equates to about \$2.28 billion in lost market value.

The company is one of three major U.S. credit bureaus, the declines extended to its competitors. TransUnion fell 4 percent and Experian stock declined 1 percent in London.

Lenders rely on the information collected by the credit bureaus to help them decide whether to approve financing for homes, cars and credit cards. Credit checks are even sometimes done by employers when deciding whom to hire for a job.

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Citation: Investors punish Equifax for massive data breach (2017, September 8) retrieved 23 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-09-investors-equifax-massive-breach.html>

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