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Contact Kylie Mason

Phone 850-245-0150

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

CA: International Charity Fraud Awareness Week



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—This week is International Charity Fraud Awareness Week, and Attorney General Ashley Moody is encouraging Floridians to give wisely. To kick off the week, Attorney General Moody is issuing a Consumer Alert with tips to help donors avoid common charity fraud schemes.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “When Floridians donate, they want their money to go to a charity that really makes a difference—not a scammer. That is why I am issuing a Consumer Alert to mark the beginning of International Charity Fraud Awareness Week. I want to encourage Floridians to be as generous as they can be to charities and causes that are dear to them, but to also give wisely—by searching the charity’s name online first and checking out the charity’s ratings with groups like the Better Business Bureau.”

Illegitimate charities hurt communities by taking donor money under false pretenses and diverting it away from legitimate organizations. Attorney General Moody encourages Floridians to donate to established, trustworthy charities with a record of helping those in need.

To help ensure donations go to the stated charitable purpose, please consider the following tips:

- Request additional information about the charity’s website, physical location, phone number, types of programs the donations support and what percentage of donated funds go to those programs. If a charity is unwilling to answer any of these questions, be cautious;

- Do not be swayed by the name of the charity alone. Often, charity names are selected to have an emotional impact on specific groups of donors. Sometimes, scammers will use a variation of an established charity's name or logo to give the appearance that the organizations are connected;
- Avoid paying with cash, gift cards or wire transfers. These methods are difficult to track and to recover. Consider donating with a more secure and trackable method such as a credit card; and
- Research before donating. Search the charity's name online, using the words scam or complaint, and check resources for information about the charity, such as Charity Navigator and the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance at (703) 247-932.

To report charitable solicitation scams or fraud to the Florida Attorney General's Office, call 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or file a complaint online at MyFloridaLegal.com.

For more charity fraud tips and resources for consumers, visit FTC.gov/Charity.

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The Florida Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division issues Consumer Alerts to inform Floridians of emerging scams, new methods used to commit fraud, increased reports of common scams, or any other deceptive practice. Consumer Alerts are designed to notify Floridians about scams and available refunds in an effort to prevent financial losses or other harm caused by deceptive practices. Anyone encountering a scam should report the incident to the Florida Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.