



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Sham Law Enforcement Fundraiser Ordered to Stop Soliciting Donations**

**BALTIMORE, MD (September 28, 2018)** - Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh and Secretary of State John C. Wobensmith announce a Cease and Desist Order has been issued today against Stephen D. Everhart, Lion Fundraising, Police Journal and Fire Yearbook, and Lion Fraternal Order of Police Assistance Fund LLC. The order follows an investigation that revealed over \$1 million in donations were solicited and received by Mr. Everhart since 2012 in violation of the Maryland Solicitations Act. Mr. Everhart posed as fake law enforcement charities to collect donations, and failed to register with the Secretary of State as either a charity or fundraiser before soliciting and collecting donations using a cash on delivery service.

“Mr. Everhart posed as a fundraiser for fake charities supposedly representing police, firefighters and veterans,” said Attorney General Frosh. “These sham charities steal from consumers and violate the trust of those who donate. Fake charities also hurt legitimate charitable organizations by siphoning off support from their good work. We are committed to putting these fraudsters out of business.”

“There is no place in Maryland for someone that scams the public in the name of charity,” said Secretary of State Wobensmith. “We will continue to work to stop those that con our citizens into donating their hard-earned money to a scam charity.”

The investigation revealed that Mr. Everhart had posed as a fundraiser since 2012. He purported to solicit on behalf of fake law enforcement, firefighter and veterans' charities. He solicited by telephone and collected donations from unsuspecting consumers using a cash on delivery service. Everhart used fake thank you letters from: McKimmie-Catterton Maryland Police Post 2979, Anne Arundel Police Post 2979, Firefighters Association, Maryland Fire Post, Coalition of Police, Anne Arundel Police Stronger Than Drugs, D.C. Police Assistance Funding, D.C. Police Association Blue Santa Drive, FOP Fundraising, Lion Charitable Fundraising, Lion Charitable Funding, Lion Fraternal Order of Police, Lion Police Fire Veterans Fundraising, Lion United Funds, Maryland Law Enforcement Fund, Police Fire Post, Police Fire Veterans Assistance Fund 2979, Police Fire Veterans Assistance Fund, and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2979.

Mr. Everhart, Lion Fundraising, Police Journal and Fire Yearbook, and Lion Fraternal Order of Police Assistance Fund LLC were not registered with the Secretary of State to solicit charitable donations.

The Office of the Secretary of State registers and regulates charitable organizations, professional solicitors, and fundraising counsel that solicit donations on behalf of charities in Maryland. The Office works to ensure that charitable contributions made by Marylanders go to qualified charitable organizations and are used for the intended purpose.

Anyone who may have been solicited by Mr. Everhart, Lion Fundraising, Lion Fundraising Police Journal and Fire Yearbook, or Lion Fraternal Order of Police Assistance Fund LLC is encouraged to call the Charities and Legal Services Division at 410-260-3859. To check if a charity or a professional solicitor is registered or to report other suspected violations of charitable giving law, please call 410-260-3879 or 1-800-825-4510.