



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Maryland Donors Warned of Charity Scams in the Wake of Natural Disasters**

**BALTIMORE, MD (September 1, 2017)** – As the public demand for donations increase for Hurricane Harvey survivors, many Marylanders may feel compelled to donate. For those that do choose to make a donation to support those in the impacted areas, Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh and Secretary of State John C. Wobensmith advise consumers to be vigilant, and donate wisely.

“Sometimes at the end of a storm, you get a rainbow; other times you get a scammer,” said Attorney General Frosh. “It is wise to research the charity first before donating, and consumers should avoid any charity or fundraiser that is reluctant to give information on how donations are used.”

“During these times of unfortunate events, individuals will attempt to prey on your generosity and introduce all types of scams, frauds or deceptive acts to line their own pockets,” warns Secretary Wobensmith. “Be sure you know who you are giving to and it is best to give directly to well-established charitable organizations.”

The Office of the Secretary of State registers and regulates charitable organizations that solicit charitable contributions in Maryland. Together with the Attorney General’s Office, the Secretary of State’s Office works to ensure that charitable contributions go to qualified charitable organizations and are used for their intended purpose.

For more tips on how to give wisely, please visit the Maryland Attorney General’s Office, Consumer Protection Division publication [Consumer's Edge Charitable Giving Tips](#).

To find out whether a particular charity is authorized to solicit in Maryland, the Secretary of State’s Office maintains a public registry of charitable organizations authorized to solicit in Maryland. For more information and to search the registry, please visit the Secretary of State’s charity home page: <http://sos.maryland.gov/Charity/Pages/SearchCharity.aspx>.

If you feel like you may have been a victim of a deceptive or illegal charitable solicitation, you should contact the Charities and Legal Services Division of the Secretary of State’s Office at [410-974-5521](tel:410-974-5521) or [1-800-825-4510](tel:1-800-825-4510).