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PRESS RELEASE

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Maryland Attorney General and Secretary State, with the FTC, File Lawsuit Against Operator of Sham Cancer Charity for Deceiving Donors

Complaint Charges Women’s Cancer Fund and Gregory Anderson with Raising More than \$18 Million from Donors, with Only 1% Going to Financial Support for Cancer Patients

BALTIMORE, MD (March 21, 2024) – Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown and Secretary of State Susan C. Lee, along with the Federal Trade Commission and nine other states, are suing sham charity Cancer Recovery Foundation International, also known as Women’s Cancer Fund, and its operator, Gregory B. Anderson, for deceiving generous donors who sought to offer financial support to women battling cancer and their families.

In a [complaint filed in federal court](#), the Attorney General and Secretary of State and their partners allege that, from 2017 to 2022, Women’s Cancer Fund collected more than \$18 million from donors. The sham charity claimed that it would use the donated funds to help women who were undergoing treatment for cancer and their families pay for basic needs. Instead, the complaint charges, only about a penny of every dollar donated went to provide such support, while the overwhelming majority went to pay for-profit fundraisers and Anderson.

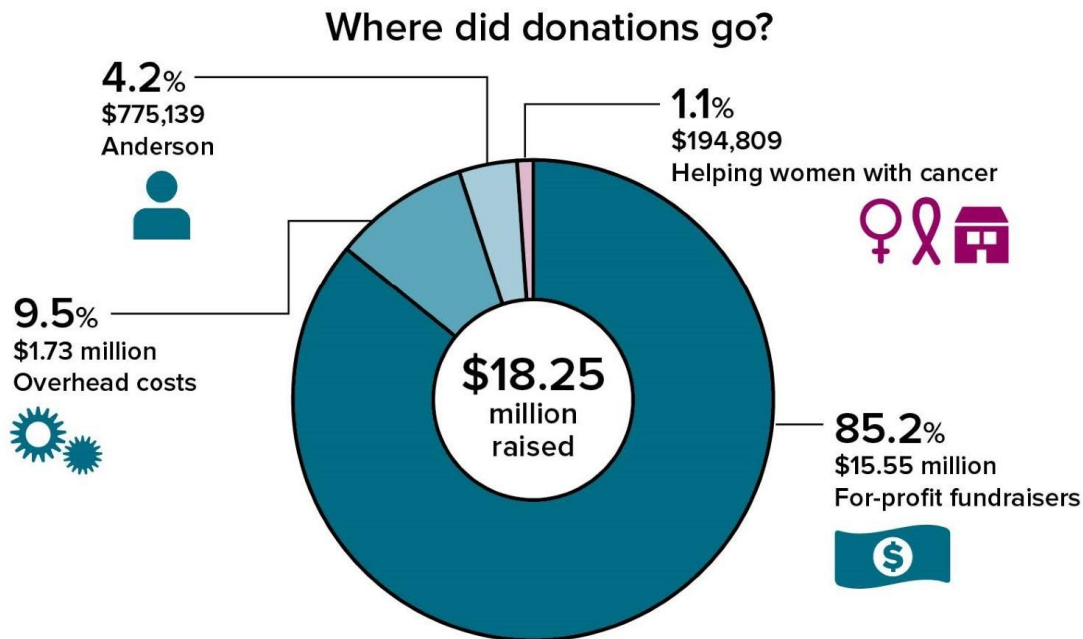
“Exploiting others for personal gain is unacceptable,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “I am committed to safeguarding Marylanders from deceptive charities that divert donations away from legitimate causes, and those who do will be held accountable.”

“The Maryland Office of the Secretary of State is committed to taking action against those who exploit the generosity of others to line their own pockets,” **said Secretary of State Lee**. “We are pleased to stand with our federal and state partners in this enforcement action.”

According to the complaint, fundraisers for Women’s Cancer Fund told prospective donors that their gifts would “help save lives” and “directly help patients with basic living expenses.” But the sham charity’s tax filings and records tell a different story, the complaint alleges.

While Women’s Cancer Fund collected \$18 million from tens of thousands of donors between 2017 and 2022, it only spent \$194,809 on financial support to cancer patients. At the same time, it paid Anderson \$775,139 – nearly four times as much as Women’s Cancer Fund collectively gave to all the cancer patients it supported. In addition to his salary, Anderson also used donated funds for various costly expenses, such as hotels and travel. Meanwhile Women’s Cancer Fund gave the vast majority of the funds it collected from donors, about 85%, to for-profit fundraisers that Anderson hired to make deceptive pitches on behalf of the sham charity.

WOMEN’S CANCER FUND (2017 – 2022)



According to the complaint, in addition to using deceptive phone solicitation pitches, Women’s Cancer Fund also used deceptive solicitation letters, often signed by Anderson. One such letter stated: “While other organizations rightfully invest millions of dollars in cancer research to find a cure for patients in the future, we help patients keep a roof over their head and the lights on so they can survive cancer today.”

The Attorney General and Secretary of State and the FTC in 2021 sued two of the fundraising companies, [Associated Community Services and Directele](#), hired by Women’s Cancer Fund for deceptive fundraising. The complaint in the latest action alleges that those enforcement actions did not deter Anderson, who went on to hire other fundraisers to make similar deceptive claims on behalf of Women’s Cancer Fund.

The complaint, which was filed by the FTC along with the attorneys general and/or secretaries of state of California, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin, alleges that Women’s Cancer Fund and Anderson violated the FTC Act, the Telemarketing Sales Rule, and state consumer protection laws.

Consumers looking for [more information about how to donate safely](#) and avoid charity scams can find it on the FTC’s website. To find out if a charity is registered to solicit in the State of Maryland, check the [SoS-Public Registry](#). To report other suspected violations of charitable

giving laws, please call 410-974-5534 or 1-800-825-4510. More information on charities can be found on the [Secretary of State's charity home page](#).

For tips on smart giving, please view the Maryland Attorney General's Office Consumer Protection Division publication [Consumer's Edge Charitable Giving Tips](#).

The FTC vote authorizing the staff to file the complaint was 3-0. The complaint was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas.

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<https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2024/032124.pdf>