



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

**News Release**

**LINDA LINGLE**  
GOVERNOR

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Mark J. Bennett, Attorney General  
Phone: (808) 586-1500  
Fax: (808) 586-1239

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**HAWAI'I FIRST STATE IN THE NATION TO ENTER INTO AN INFORMATION SHARING AGREEMENT WITH THE IRS TO PROVIDE MORE EFFECTIVE CHARITABLE OVERSIGHT**

HONOLULU – The State of Hawai'i has become the first state in the nation to enter into an information sharing agreement with the Internal Revenue Service to strengthen the state's oversight of charitable organizations.

On January 29, 2008, state Attorney General Mark Bennett and the Exempt Organizations Division of the Internal Revenue Service entered into an information sharing agreement pursuant to provisions of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 (PPA). The PPA for the first time authorized the IRS to share confidential tax return information with state charity oversight agencies, provided that adequate safeguards are established to maintain the confidentiality of such information.

"This groundbreaking information sharing agreement with the IRS will further strengthen the state's efforts to provide effective oversight of Hawai'i's 5,500 charitable institutions that administer \$16 billion in assets and employ over 41,000 people," said Bennett.

With regard to this landmark agreement, Attorney General Mark Bennett stated that:

The Hawaii Attorney General has common law authority to provide charitable oversight in his capacity as *parens patriae*. In 2005, the Legislature passed two separate pieces of legislation introduced by the Administration that have significantly strengthened the State's oversight of charitable corporations and professional fundraisers and strengthened Hawai'i's charitable solicitation law.

This legislative session, the Administration is also proposing a comprehensive charity registration law (H.B. 3046, S.B. 2968) that would strengthen laws protecting the public

from fraudulent or misleading charitable solicitations and appeals, require charitable organizations to register and provide information on their operations, require charities to file financial statements and tighten requirements for professional fundraisers and solicitors.

Deputy Attorney General Hugh Jones is currently president of the National Association of State Charity Officials.

Information regarding Hawai'i's charitable solicitation law, registration law, a list of registered and bonded fundraisers and financial reports by professional solicitors are available on the Attorney General's website at [http://www.hawaii.gov/ag/charity\\_resources.htm](http://www.hawaii.gov/ag/charity_resources.htm)

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For more information, contact:  
Hugh R. Jones  
Supervising Deputy Attorney General  
Tax Division  
(808) 586-1473  
[hugh.r.jones@hawaii.gov](mailto:hugh.r.jones@hawaii.gov)  
[www.hawaii.gov/ag/charity\\_resources.htm](http://www.hawaii.gov/ag/charity_resources.htm)