



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA

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**ATTORNEY GENERAL LOPEZ KICKS OFF INTERNATIONAL CHARITY FRAUD  
AWARENESS WEEK**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 27, 2023

HONOLULU – Attorney General Anne Lopez has kicked off International Charity Fraud Awareness Week, which runs from November 27 to December 1, joining state charities regulators nationwide, the National Association of State Charities Officials and the Federal Trade Commission. International Charity Fraud Awareness Week is a coordinated international campaign to help donors and charities avoid charity fraud and to promote informed giving.

“In the wake of the Maui wildfires, the Department of the Attorney General’s participation and support of this global campaign has taken on greater meaning,” said Attorney General Lopez. “Ensuring that charitable donations go directly to reputable and legitimate charities is a critical government concern as our state has seen a wave of donations and increased fundraising efforts to help victims and assist in the recovery relief effort on Maui.”

“Our goals are to continue to raise awareness so that the people of Hawai‘i can make informed and thoughtful decisions about the charities we choose to support and to ensure bad actors do not exploit our goodwill,” continued Attorney General Lopez. “We have received reports and complaints of organizations and fundraisers soliciting donations for Maui fire victims. I urge everyone to be vigilant and utilize publicly available resources to help people avoid suspicious fundraisers and scammers pretending to be charities.”

As part of the Department of the Attorney General’s continuing commitment to regulating charities in Hawai‘i, the Department has hired Paula Youngling as its Charities Program Administrator. She is responsible for managing and monitoring more

than 9,000 actively registered charitable organizations and is dedicated exclusively to the operational demands of the charities program.

The Department of the Attorney General's Tax and Charities Division is working to ensure that charities and fundraisers are aware of and abide by legal requirements, while also educating donors and evaluating their complaints and inquiries concerning suspicious activities.

Attorney General Lopez urges Hawai'i residents to verify a charity is legitimate **before** donating by checking their status on the following websites:

- **Hawaii Attorney General:** <https://charity.ehawaii.gov/charity/welcome.html>
- **IRS Tax Exempt Organization Search:** <https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/>
- **Charity Navigator:** <https://www.charitynavigator.org/>
- **DCCA Business Search:** <https://hbe.ehawaii.gov/documents/search.html>

Any questions or complaints about a suspicious charity or fundraiser can be directed to the Tax & Charities Division at (808) 586-1480 or by sending an email to [ATG.Charities@hawaii.gov](mailto:ATG.Charities@hawaii.gov).

Please join our efforts at #StopCharityFraud and follow the Hawai'i Attorney General on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Atghlgov> this week for additional daily tips on preventing and avoiding charity fraud.

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