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**From:** Attorney General Ellen F. Rosenblum <attorneygeneral@doj.state.or.us>  
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**To:**  
**Subject:** Wise Giving: A New Holiday Tradition!



Oregon Department of Justice  
FINANCIAL FRAUD/CONSUMER PROTECTION SECTION

# SCAM ALERT

## Wise Giving: A New Holiday Tradition!

At the Oregon Attorney General's office, it is time for a new holiday tradition! Since 2009, the Oregon Attorney General has published the "20 worst charities", an annual review of nonprofits that spend the majority of their donations on administrative costs or hiring professional fundraisers rather than on the cause they support. But, in 2013 Oregon passed a law that gives the Attorney General new tools to prevent nonprofit abuse and better protect donors.



Attorney General Ellen  
Rosenblum

Thanks to this new law 13 of the worst charities from last year no longer solicit in Oregon and 3 improved their performance. How is that for a holiday gift?

But, three out-of-state charities did not stop soliciting in Oregon, and are still on the "worst charities" list. Beware - Oregonians who donate to these three organizations will not receive an Oregon tax deduction for their donation:

- [Dakota Indian Foundation, Inc.](#) (South Dakota)
- [Firefighters Support Foundation, Inc.](#) (Massachusetts)
- [National Veterans Services Fund, Inc.](#) (Connecticut)

One other charity, Car Donation Foundation, status is pending. "Even with Oregon's tougher charities laws, this does not mean that all charities are the same. While it's reassuring to know that the worst of the worst charities no longer operate in our state, we need to make sure we give wisely. With 19,000 registered charities in Oregon, we should all be diligent and do our homework," said Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum.

Tips to follow before you donate:

- **Research.** Did you search [Oregon DOJ's NEW online tool](#) to make sure the non-profit is registered and to review copies of its financial reports? You can also check Charity Navigator and other sites to learn more about the organization.
- **Review.** Some charities will sell your name. Make sure you ask the charity if they plan to sell your name, and always read the fine print.
- **Understand.** Interested in a crowdfunding campaign? Donations made through sites like IndieGoGo, Kickstarter, and GoFundMe may not be tax-deductible. And unlike public charities, crowdfunding is not regulated or subject to financial reporting and disclosure requirements. There is no guarantee your donation will be spent appropriately.
- **Initiate.** Seek out the organizations that you want to support. Beware of solicitations that look like an invoice or mail from an unfamiliar organization that thanks you for your previous support and asks you to give more. It might be a scam.
- **Report.** If you suspect fraud this holiday season, call the

Oregon Department of Justice at 971-673-1880 or file a complaint online at [www.oregonconsumer.gov](http://www.oregonconsumer.gov).



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Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum | 1162 Court Street, NE | Salem | OR | 97301