



## **News for Immediate Release**

**April 18, 2013**

### **Dept. of State Warns of Charity Scams after Boston Marathon Explosions**

**Harrisburg** – Secretary of the Commonwealth Carol Aichele today warned Pennsylvanians to beware of phony charities asking for donations to help victims of the Boston Marathon explosions.

"We have received reports from online industry sites of more than 125 online domain names related to the bombing being registered since Monday, as well as a number of Twitter accounts," said Aichele, whose department includes the Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations.

"To date, the Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations has not received any applications for charities related to this tragedy, so Pennsylvanians should be extra cautious if they are asked for funds," Aichele said.

Any organization soliciting donations in Pennsylvania is required to register with the Department of State, with the exception of religious organizations.

You can check to see if an organization is registered by going to [www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us), clicking on "Charities", then clicking on "Searchable Database", and typing in the organization's name. You can also call 800-732-0999 to ask if a group is registered.

Aichele cautioned against giving personal information, such as credit card numbers, over the phone or on line, unless you are familiar with the organization. She said reputable charities should be willing to provide addresses and phone numbers, and you should never feel pressured into donating on the spot.

"Unfortunately, whenever there is a tragedy, unscrupulous people prey on the generous nature of Pennsylvanians who want to help," Aichele said.

"While established organizations may ask for public donations to help victims of the bombing, and legitimate groups may arise specifically for this purpose, I urge all Pennsylvanians to be cautious and ask questions before donating your hard earned money. If you aren't sure, hang up, leave the website, or check with the Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations before giving money."

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