



State of California
Office of the Attorney General

ROB BONTA
ATTORNEY GENERAL

March 3, 2026

VIA U.S. MAIL AND E-MAIL

Kim Wilford
General Counsel
GoFundMe
8605 Santa Monica Blvd. #17221
West Hollywood, CA 90069-4109

Dear Ms. Wilford:

The undersigned state Attorneys General and charitable regulators (collectively, the “States”) are issuing this public letter to express our grave concerns about GoFundMe’s creation of donation web pages for more than 1.4 million charities without their prior knowledge or consent, prompting an outcry from charities nationwide whose identities were plagiarized. Although the States understand GoFundMe may have subsequently removed the unauthorized donation web pages and is now obtaining prior consent from impacted charities, we seek immediate verification of the steps GoFundMe has taken and demand more be done to protect the interests of charities and donors.

GoFundMe Creates Unauthorized Charity Donation Web Pages

As has been publicly reported, in October of 2025, GoFundMe created its own donation web pages for 1.4 million charities located in the United States, without first asking those charities for permission. Based on public reports, we understand that GoFundMe generated these pages without the prior knowledge or consent of the referenced charities, and these charities, upon discovering the GoFundMe pages, were deeply troubled that the pages were set up in their names without their knowledge.¹ The charities whose identities were taken by GoFundMe were

¹See, e.g., Stephanie Sierra, *GoFundMe created 1.4M donation pages for nonprofits; some Bay Area organizations had no clue*, ABC7News, <https://abc7news.com/post/gofundme-created-14-million-donation-pages-nonprofits-bay-area-organizations-had-no-clue/18013410/>; Gina Christian, *San Antonio Archdiocese pushes back at unapproved GoFundMe donation pages*, National Catholic Reporter, <https://www.ncronline.org/news/san-antonio-archdiocese-pushes-back-unapproved-gofundme-donation-pages>; Stephanie Sierra, *GoFundMe takes responsibility for creating pages without nonprofits’ consent: ‘We’re very sorry,’* ABC7News, <https://abc7news.com/post/gofundme-apologizes-creating-donation->

unable to control their fundraising and brand. The unauthorized pages also created donor confusion, deception, distrust, and conflicting messaging. Additionally, GoFundMe's creation of these websites led to the following:

- **Inaccurate Charity Information:** Public reports indicate inaccurate names, logos, social media sites, and charitable purposes of many charities were displayed on the pages created by GoFundMe, which demonstrates how imperative it is to obtain prior consent for fundraising using a charity's information.
- **Disclosure about Donor-Advised Fund (DAF) Structure:** In some instances, the pages did not clearly disclose that contributions were made to a DAF sponsor rather than the featured charity, explain the nature of a DAF vehicle or its implications for donor intent and fund distribution, and thereby risked deceiving and confusing the public.
- **Impression of Charity Affiliation:** According to public reports, the overall page presentations likely gave donors the impression that the pages were operated by, or directly affiliated with, the named charities—when instead, they were actually operated by GoFundMe.
- **Default Tip and Search Engine Optimization:** In addition, public reports indicate GoFundMe's donation pages may have applied a default "tip" of approximately 16.5% intended to pay GoFundMe directly. Those same public reports allege GoFundMe used search engine optimization (SEO) that caused its donation pages to appear above official fundraising campaigns maintained by the charities themselves. If true, the SEO may have diverted prospective donors from giving directly to the charities, or worse, the public in need of charitable services, looking for the charities' official websites.

Potential Violations Under State Law

These practices could violate numerous state charitable solicitation and consumer protection laws, including but not limited to:

- **Lack of Required Consent:**² Many states require written consent from a charity before a third party may solicit funds using that charity's name, intellectual property, or likeness.

[pages-nonprofits-consent-vows-make-changes/18082313](#); George Weiner, *1.4 Million Donation Pages without Permission created by GoFundMe*, Nonprofit NewsFeed, <https://nonprofitnewsfeed.com/news/1-4-million-donation-pages-without-permission-created-by-gofundme/>; Heidi K. Abegg, *Client Alert: With Giving Tuesday Approaching, What Nonprofits Need to Know About GoFundMe's creation of Over A Million Unauthorized Nonprofit Donation Pages*, Whiteford, <https://www.whitefordlaw.com/news-events/client-alert-with-giving-tuesday-approaching-what-nonprofits-need-to-know-about-gofundmes-creation-of-over-a-million-unauthorized-nonprofit-donation-pages>.

² See, e.g., Ala. Code § 13A-9-71(l) (2024); Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44-6561(A)(1) (2025); Ark. Code Ann. § 4-28-412(5) (2025); Cal. Gov't Code § 12599.6(f)(5), (11) (West 2024); Cal. Gov't Code § 12599.9(f) (West 2025); Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200 (West 1993); Conn. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 21a-190h(7) (West 2005); D.C. Code § 44-1711(a) (Lexis June 2018 Supp.); Del. Code Ann. tit. 6, § 2595(b)(9) (2025); Fla. Stat. § 496.415(4) (2025); Ga. Code Ann. § 43-17-12(c)(1) (West 2008); Haw.

- **Deceptive or Misleading Conduct:**³ Presenting a web page in a manner that may lead donors to believe it is operated by, or directly connected to, a charity likely violates various state statutes that prohibit deceptive advertising or solicitation practices.
- **Insufficient or Omitted Disclosures:**⁴ Failure to clearly and conspicuously disclose material information—such as the identity of the entity actually receiving donations, the use of a DAF intermediary, that donors can no longer direct the donation, and that charities may not be sent donations promptly, if at all—presents compliance issues under various state laws.

These considerations are neither exhaustive nor determinative.

Rev. Stat. Ann. § 467B-9(a) (West 2013); Iowa Code § 13C.3 (2021); Kan. Stat. Ann. § 17-1769(d) (2024); Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 367.667(1)(a) (West 2019); Md. Code Ann., Bus. Reg. § 6-609(a) (LexisNexis 2024); Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 68, § 28(d) (2025); Mich. Comp. Laws § 400.288(1) (2011); Minn. Stat. § 309.55, subdiv. 1 (2025); N.C. Gen. Stat. § 131F-20(6) (2012), §§ 75-1.1 et seq.; N.H. RSA 7:28-f, I (c), (f) (Lexis 2020); N.Y. Exec. Law § 174-d(1) (McKinney 2019); Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 1716.14(A)(3) (West 2025); Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 18, § 552.14a(A)(5) (West 2011); Or. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 128.856 (West 2025); 10 Pa. Stat. § 162.15 (West 1992); S.C. Code Ann. § 33-56-120(D) (2014); Tenn. Code Ann. § 48-101-513(f) (West 2025); Utah Code Ann. § 13-22-17 (West); Va. Code Ann. § 57-57(E) (2003); Wash. Rev. Code § 19.09.230 (2011); Wis. Stat. § 202.16(1)(b) (2015).

³ See, e.g., *Ala. Code § 13A-9-71(o) (2024); Alaska Stat. § 45.68.050(3) (2024); Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 44-6561(A)(2) (2025); Ark. Code Ann. § 4-28-412(6) (2025); Cal. Gov't Code § 12599.6(f)(2), (3) (West 2024); Cal. Gov't Code § 12599.9(e) (West 2025); Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200 (West 1993); Conn. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 21a-190h(8) (West 2005); D.C. Code § 44-1711(b) (Lexis June 2018 Supp.); Del. Code Ann. tit. 6, § 2595(b)(10) (2025); Fla. Stat. § 496.415(5) (2025); Ga. Code Ann. § 43-17-12(c)(2) (West 2008); Haw. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 467B-9(b) (West 2013); 225 Ill. Comp. Stat. 460/11(d) (2024); Kan. Stat. Ann. § 17-1769(e) (2024); Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 367.667(1)(b) (West 2019); Md. Code Ann., Bus. Reg. § 6-608 (LexisNexis 2024); Mich. Comp. Laws § 400.288(1) (2011); Minn. Stat. § 309.55, subdiv. 2 (2025); N.C. Gen. Stat. § 131F-20(7) (2012), §§ 75-1.1 et seq.; N.H. RSA 7:28-I(b) (Lexis 2020); N.J. Rev. Stat. § 45:17A-32(c)(4) (2005); N.M. Stat. Ann. § 57-22-6.3(A)(2) (West 2025); N.Y. Exec. Law § 174 (McKinney 2019); Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 1716.14(A)(4) (West 2025); Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 18, § 552.14a(A)(5) (West 2011); Or. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 646.608 (West 2025); 10 Pa. Stat. § 162.15 (West 1992); 5 R.I. Gen. Laws § 5-53.1-7(11) (2025); Utah Code Ann. § 13-22-13; § 13-11-4 (West); Wash. Rev. Code § 19.09.100(15) (2011); Wis. Stat. § 202.16(1)(c) (2015).*

⁴ See, e.g., *Ala. Code § 13A-9-71(a) (2024); Ark. Code Ann. § 4-28-402(b)(3) (2025); Cal. Gov't Code § 12599.6(f)(2), (3) (West 2024); Cal. Gov't Code § 12599.9(e) (West 2025); Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code § 17200 (West 1993); Fla. Stat. § 496.405(2)(b) (2025); Ga. Code Ann. § 43-17-8(a)(3)(A) (West 2010); 225 Ill. Comp. Stat. 460/2 (2024); La. Stat. Ann. § 51:1904.1 (2024); Md. Code Ann., Bus. Reg. § 6-608 (LexisNexis 2024); Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 68, § 23(1) (2025); Mich. Comp. Laws § 400.288(1) (2011); Minn. Stat. § 309.556, subdiv. 1 (2025); Miss. Code Ann. § 79-11-503(1) (West 2016); N.C. Gen. Stat. § 131F-9(b) (2012), §§ 75-1.1 et seq.; Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 18, § 552.14a (West); Or. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 646.608 (West 2025); 10 Pa. Stat. § 162.15 (West 1992); 5 R.I. Gen. Laws § 5-53.1-12(a) (2025); Utah Code Ann. § 13-22-13; § 13-11-4 (West); Wash. Rev. Code § 19.09.100(1), (4), & (15) (2011); Wis. Stat. § 202.12(6m) (2015).*

Demand for Corrective Action

In light of the above, the States demand that GoFundMe immediately confirm that the following remedial measures have been taken:

1. Provide proof that GoFundMe has removed all unauthorized donation web pages and is requiring prior consent for charity donation web pages.
2. Demonstrate the takedown procedures implemented to remove unauthorized donation pages without action by the charity.
3. Explain how GoFundMe has modified its SEO practices to ensure charities' own fundraising campaigns or websites are not disadvantaged.

The States further demand that GoFundMe undertake a comprehensive review of relevant policies and procedures, and implement the following additional remedial measures immediately:

1. Prominently disclose all material information that would reasonably affect a person's decision to donate, including:
 - the legal recipient of the donation;
 - the role and nature of any DAF sponsor; and
 - any fees, tips, or other amounts added to or deducted from donor contributions.
2. Ensure any fundraising or donation web page, campaign, or solicitation does not imply that GoFundMe is the intended charity, is operating on behalf of the charity, or has any affiliation if one does not exist.
3. Review whether "tips" or analogous charges collected by GoFundMe should be redirected to the charities.

As States charged with protecting charitable assets, ensuring truthful solicitation of charitable donations, and overseeing entities that engage in charitable fundraising, we appreciate your attention to these important issues. Please contact California Deputy Attorney General Stephen Abanise at Stephen.Abanise@doj.ca.gov with your response no later than 14 days from the date of this letter. Investigative requests from interested States are also forthcoming.

Sincerely,



ROB BONTA
California Attorney General



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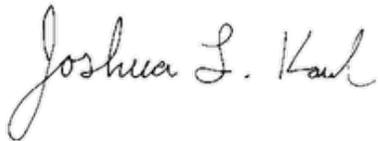
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/s/

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