Many charities throughout Illinois work hard to help those in need. These charities deserve our support. Unfortunately, a few fraudulent charities are concerned only with helping themselves. To make sure your money goes to a legitimate charity and is used in ways you consider appropriate, follow these important tips:

✓ **Ask how much of your donation will go to the charity and how much will be used to pay fund-raising costs.** Solicitors must give you this information if you ask.

✓ **Pay close attention to the name of the charity.** Some fraudulent charities use names that sound or look like those of legitimate organizations to mislead you.

✓ **Ask questions about the charity.** Donate only when your questions have been answered and you are certain your money will be used according to your wishes.

✓ **Do not pay in cash.** For security and tax record purposes, pay by check. Be sure to write the full official name of the charity on your check—do not abbreviate.

✓ **Request written information.** A legitimate charity will provide you with information outlining its mission, how your donation will be distributed, and proof that your contribution is tax deductible.

✓ **Do not donate if the solicitor uses high-pressure tactics, asks for cash payment, or insists on sending someone to pick up your donation.** These are all hallmarks of a scam.

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**Please visit:**

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**Consumer Fraud Hotlines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
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<th>Telephone Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>1-800-386-5438</td>
<td>1-800-243-0618</td>
<td>1-800-243-0607</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>