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The Louisville Naval Museum, Inc. Ordered to Stop Soliciting in Maryland

Annapolis, MD (**November 30, 2023**) - Secretary of State Susan C. Lee and Maryland Attorney General Anthony G. Brown are announcing that a Cease and Desist Order has been issued against Louisville Naval Museum, Inc., a Kentucky-based charitable organization, requiring that the organization end charitable soliciting in the State of Maryland. The organization has also operated under the names P-520 and the Veterans Heritage Foundation. The Cease and Desist Order was issued late last month following an investigation that revealed the organization was not registered to solicit charitable contributions in the State of Maryland, a violation of the Maryland Solicitations Act. Despite being informed of the registration requirement on several occasions, Louisville Naval Museum, Inc. continued to improperly fundraise around the Chesapeake Bay area and failed to provide mandated public disclosures. The organization was provided 30 days to request a hearing to contest the Cease and Desist Order, which it did not.

The Office of the Secretary of State registers and regulates all charitable organizations that solicit charitable contributions in Maryland. The Office works to ensure that charitable contributions made by Marylanders go to qualified charitable organizations and are used for the intended purpose.

“State reporting requirements exist to bolster the public’s confidence that donations will go towards the good work that legitimate charities do every day,” said Secretary of State Lee. “I applaud this effort to enforce the laws requiring donors to have access to vital information on who is soliciting and how donations are used by them.”

“We are working together with the Office of the Secretary of State to help prevent Marylanders from making donations to untrustworthy organizations,” said Attorney General Brown. “Charities are required to register annually and to report specific information to the state to ensure that they are, indeed, legitimate. Thorough reporting allows donors to access the materials needed to remain informed and confident that their hard-earned money is being distributed in the way that they intended.”

Louisville Naval Museum, Inc. is believed to have operated aboard a vessel, named the P-520, in several Chesapeake Bay towns and cities, including Annapolis from late 2020 through early 2021, Crisfield from June 2022 through September 2022, and Baltimore from September 2022 through January 2023. Louisville Naval Museum, Inc. is believed to have solicited money throughout the state for years without providing any required annual disclosures to the Secretary of State’s Office. Even after being informed of the need to register, the organization failed to do so and ignored multiple communications from the Secretary of State’s Office inquiring about its fundraising practices.

Anyone who has been solicited by the Louisville Naval Museum, Inc., the P-520, or the Veterans Heritage Foundation, or any representative on behalf of this organization, is encouraged to contact Investigator Robert Gurley with the Charities and Legal Services Division at [410-260-3859](tel:410-260-3859) or DLInvestigations_SOS@maryland.gov.

To find out if a charity is registered, check the [SoS-Public Registry](#). To report other suspected violations of charitable giving laws, please call [410-974-5534](tel:410-974-5534) or [1-800-825-4510](tel:1-800-825-4510). More information on charities can be found on the [Secretary of State’s charity home page](#).

For tips on smart giving, please view the Maryland Attorney General’s Office Consumer Protection Division publication [Consumer’s Edge Charitable Giving Tips](#).