



News from:
COMPTROLLER KEVIN LEMBO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2016

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**COMPTROLLER LEMBO INVESTIGATES WHETHER
AMERICAN FAMILY ASSOCIATION BROKE ANTI-
DISCRIMINATION RULES OF STATE CHARITABLE CAMPAIGN**

Comptroller Kevin Lembo today announced an ongoing investigation into whether the American Family Association (AFA) may have violated the regulations governing the Connecticut State Employee Campaign for Charitable Giving (CSEC) that broadly prohibits discrimination.

Lembo serves as administrator of the CSEC, an initiative to enable and encourage state employees to donate to charitable organizations. State employees donate millions of dollars every year through the CSEC, benefiting hundreds of charities that provide services to the homeless, children, senior citizens, as well as funding to cure diseases and protect the environment.

All recipient organizations, as a condition of participating in the CSEC, must submit an anti-discrimination certification each year and comply with all relevant state laws.

In a letter to the American Family Association today, Lembo raised questions about what, if any, charitable services the AFA is delivering and said there are indications that the AFA may be violating the campaign's anti-discrimination prohibitions.

"The AFA's actions and statements are extremely troubling to me," said Lembo, who is Connecticut's first openly gay statewide elected official. "The AFA's public statements and mission not only appear to discriminate against the LGBTQ communities, as well as Muslims who choose to serve and protect our country by enlisting in the U.S. military, but it remains unclear what actual charitable services the AFA provides that qualifies it to participate in the CSEC. I am, therefore, initiating an investigation to determine whether

AFA is in compliance with the requirements of the CSEC.

“We have a responsibility to donors to ensure that participating organizations abide by the rules and regulations of the CSEC, particularly those that ensure inclusiveness and protection against discrimination.”

The AFA, on its website, claims to seek to “hold companies accountable” that “attack traditional family values.”

However, Lembo said a review of AFA’s statements on its website, in published reports and on social media indicate that their efforts involve “combatting the homosexual agenda” by boycotting companies that promote equal treatment, tolerance and acceptance of all families and marriages.

The AFA’s efforts have included a nationwide petition to boycott Target for the company’s inclusive transgender restroom policy and denouncing Zales for “normalizing sin” by advertising wedding bands to same-sex couples.

Lembo said the AFA has also reportedly spoken out in recent years against gay and Muslim individuals serving in the U.S. military, and has equated homosexuality with pedophilia, disease and violence.

“I’m proud to live in a state that broadly prohibits discrimination against any person or group – whether it’s due to an individual’s race, color, religion, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, national origin, ancestry or disability,” Lembo said. “And there is certainly no room for discrimination in a charitable campaign intended to improve and better our community.”

Lembo has asked AFA to provide written documentation of its stated policy of non-discrimination, and documentation affirming that the AFA is in compliance with all federal and state laws regarding equal employment opportunity and public accommodations with respect to its programs, clients, officers, employees and volunteers.

Lembo also asked that AFA provide documentation demonstrating that the AFA is engaged in the delivery of charitable and public health, welfare, environmental, conservation or service purposes.

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