

PRESS RELEASE

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Tax Checkoff Program is “A Simple Way to Give” in These Trying Times

In times of steep budget cuts and reduced donations, Checkoff Colorado helps nonprofits receive urgently needed support by allowing taxpayers to make a big difference with a small donation from their tax refund

(Denver, CO – March 15, 2010) – We all know the challenging economy is hurting businesses, but no one is suffering more or needs help more urgently than Colorado’s charitable and non-profit organizations. Luckily there is “a simple way to give” to some of these worthy causes: Checkoff Colorado.

Checkoff Colorado is a statewide grassroots public awareness campaign focused on educating taxpayers and tax preparers about check-off giving. That’s the program that allows taxpayers to make voluntary contributions to their favorite charitable organizations when they file their state income tax return. This year, 12 out of the 14 approved funds are participating in the collaborative public awareness campaign.

New this year is a change made by the Department of Revenue that means **donations can only be made from a taxpayer’s refund, not from the money (tax liability) an individual owes.** Taxpayers can “check-off” a donation to any one or several of the organizations listed on the 2009 Colorado 104 individual income tax form. Each of the funds was established after a vigorous review process by the Colorado State Legislature.

Colorado was the first state in the country to allow a taxpayer to “check-off” a voluntary contribution to a charitable program from their state income tax return. In 1977, the Colorado Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Fund became the first state income tax check-off fund in the United States. Checkoff donations can make a profound difference for Colorado’s health, Alzheimer’s patients, pet overpopulation, children, wildlife protection programs, Special Olympics athletes, healthy rivers, homeless prevention programs, people with Multiple Sclerosis, victims of domestic violence and military families, among others.

“The beauty of the tax checkoff program is that even a small donation goes a long way,” said Jon Pushkin, spokesperson for Checkoff Colorado. “Regardless of their income or the amount they give, every taxpayer can feel like they are making a real difference. It really is a simple way to give.”

To become a checkoff program, each fund must demonstrate that it provides an important service to communities across the state. Every fund must be established by law after undergoing a thorough review by the Colorado Legislature.

About Checkoff Colorado

In 2003, Checkoff Colorado became the first collaborative statewide campaign to raise awareness about tax checkoff programs. The campaign is a grassroots effort to educate tax payers and tax preparers. It is funded by contributions from participating funds and supported by a donation from the Credit Union of Colorado (www.cuofco.org).

Now in its eighth year, Checkoff Colorado is gaining the attention of other states, including California, which established Checkoff California in 2007, and Georgia. For a complete list of tax checkoff funds and more information on the Checkoff Colorado campaign, go to www.checkoffcolorado.org.

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