

assistance in the recovery efforts.

8. Respondent began the solicitation of donations on or about August 29, 2017. All solicitations of donations are limited to the relief efforts for Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma. All solicitations of donations are limited to Respondent's employees and employees of Aaron's, Inc.

9. To date, Respondent has received approximately 270 donations and collected approximately \$60,000.00 through its gofundme.com webpage.

10. Respondent's gofundme.com page will cease collecting donations on September 20, 2017.

11. Respondent is aware of charitable registration requirements in Georgia and has expressed a desire to properly follow said requirements. Respondent contacted the Secretary on or about September 15, 2017 to inquire regarding whether charitable registration was required in this instance.

12. Respondent has agreed to provide the Secretary with notice of end of contribution campaign, the record of all contributions including but not limited to the, the name and address of each contributor giving of \$25.00 or more directly or indirectly to the organization, and proof of where the monies will be donated after the collection period ends.

13. Respondent has requested that the Secretary exempt the organization from charitable registration for this one-time hurricane relief effort contribution campaign.

II. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

14. Paragraphs 1 through 13 are incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

15. The Secretary/Commissioner has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to the Act.

16. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 43-17-9(e), the Commissioner is "authorized to exempt by rule, regulation, or order such entities and organizations from the registration provisions of Code Section 43-17-5 as he deems necessary and appropriate in the public interest."

17. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 43-17-5(a), it is "unlawful for any person: ... (2) [w]hile in this state to solicit or accept charitable contributions from any person wherever located...unless the charitable organization on whose behalf such contributions are being solicited or accepted is subject to an effective registration statement of exempt from registration" pursuant to Code Section 43-17-9.

18. Respondent's solicitation and acceptance of charitable contributions to assist in the recovery efforts for hurricanes Harvey and Irma is necessary and appropriate in the public interest. As a result, Respondent shall be exempt from registration as a charitable organization under O.C.G.A. § 43-17-5.

III. ORDER

WHEREFORE, by the authority vested in me as the Secretary of State for the State of Georgia, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

1. **Aaron's Foundation, Inc. shall be deemed EXEMPT FROM REGISTRATION as a**

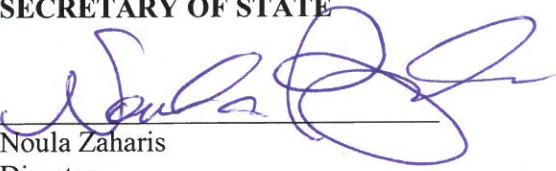
charitable organization, with regard to the solicitation described herein, under the Georgia Charitable Solicitations Act of 1988, as amended.

The entry of this Order is deemed to be in the public interest, and shall not be deemed to constitute findings or conclusions relating to other persons unrelated to Respondent and shall not be deemed to be a waiver or estoppel on the part of the Secretary of State from proceeding in individual actions against any person who may have violated the Act or any transactions not specifically referred to herein or not known to the Commissioner at the time this Order was issued.

SO ORDERED this 27th day of September, 2017.

**BRIAN P. KEMP
SECRETARY OF STATE**

By:



Noula Zaharis
Director