

NEWS RELEASE



Governor Bob Taft

TAFT KICKS OFF STATE COMBINED CHARITABLE CAMPAIGN
State employees' donations help provide services to thousands, including victims of Hurricane Katrina

COLUMBUS (September 7, 2005) – Governor Bob Taft today kicked off the state's 2005 Combined Charitable Campaign, which runs through October 14, at a rally held in the Riffe Center in downtown Columbus. The rally recognized the efforts of state employees in the 2004 campaign and encouraged them to continue their support this year. Taft also highlighted a special option for state employees to give to the American Red Cross, Hurricane 2005 Relief Fund.

“Ohio is a leader among states in combined charitable giving, and I commend our state employees who take this opportunity to give to others,” said Taft. “I encourage everyone to participate because these gifts make a great difference in the lives of thousands of people.”

The Combined Charitable Campaign is state government's primary charitable fundraising drive. Through it, state employees have the opportunity to give to more than 2,300 charitable organizations through one-time donations and payroll deductions. Overseeing this year's campaign are co-chairmen Tom Hayes, director of the Ohio Lottery Commission; and Kelvin Jones, representing the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association. Ron Alexander, president of OCSEA/AFSCME, also shared a few remarks at the Combined Charitable Campaign kick off.

“The campaign gives each one of us the opportunity to strengthen our communities through a variety of programs dealing with health, human services, education and the environment,” said Hayes. “By designating gifts to charities of our own choosing, Ohio's state employees can contribute to the causes, issues, and programs they care about most.”

This year the goal is \$4.4 million, a 5 percent increase from last year's goal of \$4.2 million. State employees contributed 16 percent over last year's goal to charities that are part of 11 “federations.”

“Each person who takes part in this campaign contributes to the well being of many people,” said Jones. “I appreciate the generosity of my fellow state employees. Their generosity is much appreciated and I specifically applaud those who have chosen to be leadership givers.”

Leadership givers are those individuals who donate \$520 for the year, or more. Last year, leadership givers made up more than half of the campaign dollars.

Kick-off ceremonies will also be held in Cleveland at 9 a.m. on September 15 at the Lausche Building in downtown Cleveland.

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