

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Cosponsor the Public Good IRA Rollover Act of 2009
Support Nonprofit Organizations in Your Communities

June 24, 2009

Dear Colleague:

In these tough economic times, many of your constituents are turning to nonprofit organizations for help with food, shelter, job training, education, health care, spiritual support, and enrichment through the arts. Although charities face a decline in giving, they continue to lend a helping hand. You can help too by cosponsoring H.R. 1250, the Public Good IRA Rollover Act of 2009.

Since enactment in 2006, the IRA Charitable Rollover encourages older individuals to give back to their communities by simplifying the tax law to make it easy to transfer money from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) to charities. Individuals aged 70½ and older can donate up to \$100,000 from their IRAs to public charities without treating their donation as taxable income. The IRA rollover is particularly helpful for older Americans who do not itemize their tax deductions.

IRA Charitable Rollovers gifts -- ranging from as little as \$10 to the maximum gift of \$100,000 -- have helped organizations build cancer centers, develop programs for counseling at-risk youth, support housing for homeless families, conserve wilderness areas, and provide art therapy for people with developmental disabilities. Unfortunately, this ability will expire at the end of 2009, just at a time when the New York Times reports that charitable giving has declined due to the state of our economy.

We introduced the Public Good IRA Rollover Act of 2009 to permanently extend this important incentive. Our bill enhances its impact on nonprofits by: removing the current dollar limit on donations per year, making all charities eligible to receive donations, and providing IRA owners with a planned giving option starting at age 59½. Your support of this legislation will enrich lives in your communities by providing much-needed resources to support the ongoing work of charities in your districts.

The "Public Good IRA Rollover Act" is a simple bill that gives seniors an easy way to provide much needed funding for churches, hospitals, museums, schools, and social service organizations. We urge you to join us as cosponsors of this bill. Please call Diane Oakley (Pomeroy) at 5-2611 or Jay Sulzmann (Herger) at 5-3076 to add your name as a cosponsor.

Sincerely,


EARL POMEROY
Member of Congress


WALLY HERGER
Member of Congress

National

The New York Times

Charitable Giving Declines, a New Report Finds

By STEPHANIE STROM

Charitable giving fell last year by the largest percentage in five decades, according to a new study by the Giving USA Foundation.

Individuals and institutions made gifts and pledges of \$307.65 billion, a decrease of 5.7 percent on an inflation-adjusted basis over the \$314 billion given in 2007, according to the foundation, a research organization backed by the fund-raising industry.

Some experts said they were surprised the drop was not even bigger, given that endowments fell by as much as 40 percent, the stock market declined by a similar margin, corporations posted unheard-of losses and unemployment was rising at a fast clip.

"So far, my clients are holding their own, by and large," said Robert F. Sharpe, a fund-raising consultant whose clients include St. Jude's Children's Research

Hospital and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

The Giving USA Foundation study found that the drop in giving accelerated in the fall, as the impact of the economic crisis and the steep decline in stock markets took hold.

"In the first half of the year, it was more or less business as usual for our clients, which is to say pretty good," said Del Martin, the chairwoman of the foundation and a partner at Alexander Haas, a fund-raising advisory firm in Atlanta. "Then, as we got into the last quarter, we saw corporations begin rethinking their giving in greatly different ways, and we saw individuals begin to revisit their philanthropic priorities."

Even with the steep drop, charitable giving remained strong. Last year's giving outstripped all previous years on record except 2007, though the outlook for next year remains uncertain.

Amherst College, for example,

had a "banner year" last year, said Megan Morey, the institution's chief advancement officer. The college received the largest bequest in its history, \$23 million, and several donors responded promptly to a new \$425 million capital campaign, enabling Am-

A big drop in giving, though donations remain high.

herst to raise a total of roughly \$70 million.

But like other nonprofit organizations, Amherst has found fund-raising in the current year tough. Ms. Morey said the annual campaign, which ends in a few weeks, is down by roughly 15 percent compared with the 2007-8 effort. "Over all," she said, "we're

tracking comparable to what we were in 2007, which I feel good about."

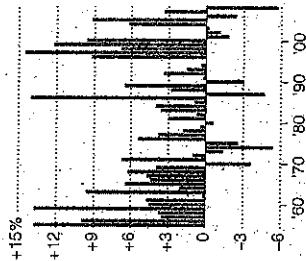
Giving USA estimated that donations to educational institutions fell 9 percent on an inflation-adjusted basis to \$40.94 billion. Colleges, universities and private schools, including Amherst, have also been hit by sharp declines in their assets.

About two-thirds of public charities saw donations decrease in 2008, the foundation said. Most surprising, Ms. Martin said, was the decline in gifts to organizations working to meet basic needs, like food banks and homeless shelters, which are seeing a big increase in demand for their services.

Many fund-raising experts had predicted that donors would increase giving to those types of charities at the expense of others, like arts groups. But the foundation estimated that gifts to those organizations fell by an inflation-

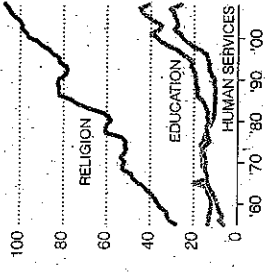
Charitable Giving in the U.S.

Giving in 2008 fell by the largest percentage in 50 years.



Note: Figures are adjusted for inflation. Source: Giving USA Foundation

But contributions to religious organizations continued to rise.



THE NEW YORK TIMES

organization, although the group recently received unexpected gifts of \$3 million and \$1.2 million to support its summer meals program from Morgan Stanley and Wal-Mart, respectively.

"We're definitely anticipating another down year," Ms. Court said.

adjusted 15.9 percent, to \$25.88 billion. Boys & Girls Clubs of America, for instance, saw donations drop 4.7 percent last year to a preliminary \$524 million.

This year is not shaping up to be any better, said Cyndi Court, executive vice president for marketing and development at the or-