

Company Behind Mattress Fundraisers Not Compliant With State Regulations For Years

PS&H Of Counsel Russell Stein shared his thoughts with WFXT's Boston25 News on Friday evening's broadcast about a popular fundraising program at Massachusetts schools whereby students and student groups raise funds by helping to sell mattresses.

As it turned out, there's a commercial company making a profit from these types of fundraisers – in this case Custom Fundraising Solutions of Boston South (CFS). According to the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, despite having organized hundreds of mattress sales fundraisers in public schools across the state, the company was not operating according to state regulations. It wasn't even registered as a business with the Secretary of the Commonwealth at the time.

Drawing on his expertise advising non-profit organizations and charitable foundations, Russell provided suggestions about the questions people should ask before buying anything through this type of fundraising event.

"I'd be concerned with that if the signage for these sales are not talking about the charity, they're not disclosing who's running it; conceivably, it could run afoul of state regulations," Russell said. Advising that the responsibility falls on the consumer and the charities, Russell suggested, "You should try to get as much information about the actual event. Ask questions. Who is doing the selling? How much money is my charity going to get?"

According to the investigative report, in one case the student organization got a check for \$8,000 from the event, but CFS owner Jack Isaacs refused to disclose what percentage of the gross profits actually went to the students. According to the web site of the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, if asked, a fundraiser must accurately disclose the percentage of funds that will go to the charity.

Click [here](#) to watch the video. (Russell's comments begin at approximately the 3:35 mark)

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