

Wiley Rein Lawyers Help Expedite Record-Setting Text Donations for Haiti

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The response by many Americans to the earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti has been to make a charitable donation . . . by sending a text message. Since the disaster, donations via text message have combined to raise more than \$30 million and the total is increasing daily for all the campaigns supporting Haitian relief. Donating in \$10 or \$5 increments to charitable organizations like Doctors Without Borders, the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund, the Yele Foundation and many others at the touch of a button is made possible because of a small nonprofit called the Mobile Giving Foundation through partnerships with cell phone providers and accredited non-profits in the U.S. and Canada. Wiley Rein partners Scott D. Delacourt and Daniel B. Hassett and associate Jerita L. DeBraux Salley, who signed on to help the Foundation with regulatory and contractual work during the holiday giving season, got more than they bargained for when the Haiti relief effort mushroomed into the biggest mobile giving event in history.

Since the earthquake, the Wiley Rein team has been handling a barrage of contracts from non-profits involved in relief seeking to add text message campaigns to their fundraising portfolio. In addition, there has been a tremendous demand to expedite payment to the charities-which normally would occur as part of wireless company billing cycles-in light of the immediate need in Haiti.

Working with the wireless carriers, Mr. Delacourt, Mr. Hassett and Ms. Salley helped the Mobile Giving Foundation to put agreements in place that reduce donation turn-around to a matter of days, ensuring relief dollars get to charities without delay.

Related Professionals

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