

### **Pick, Click, Give. Fundraising and the Public-Private Partnership.**

States possess a compelling interest in ensuring their local nonprofit sector is healthy, robust, and well funded. This is shown in the multitude of tax incentives for social and education nonprofits, including the all-powerful 501(c)(3) designation. However, as more nonprofits are created, the existing pool of funding becomes more competitive. The nonprofit sector most often reacts to this shortage by increasing the sophistication of nonprofit actors within the limited marketplace for grants and other sources of funding. Organizations like The Foraker Group, based in Anchorage, Alaska offer consultation and training in grant writing, employment law, best business practices, and manage an online funding subscription. *See* “Products,” [www.forakergroup.org](http://www.forakergroup.org) (last visited Nov, 22, 2013). Despite these positive steps forward, a larger problem remains in reacting to a limited funding source. How can we make the pool of funding available to nonprofit organizations larger?

An answer may be brewing in our northernmost state in partnership with their unique “PFD” system. Permanent Fund Dividends (PFDs) are distributed to Alaskans on an annual basis in an amount derived from income on oil lease royalties. The fund for PFDs is currently valued at over forty-seven billion dollars. *See* “Fund Market Value,” Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation available at <http://www.apfc.org/home/Content/home/index.cfm>, last visited Oct. 13, 2013. This year, every qualified Alaskan received a check for \$900.00. [pfd.alaska.gov](http://pfd.alaska.gov). Every Alaskan must apply for their PFD annually between January 1<sup>st</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup>, either online or by mail. The internet application site is run through the State of Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend Division. At the end of the application, the applicant is asked whether he or she would like to donate a portion or all of his or her PFD to a 501(c)(3) organization using a drop-down list and a box to fill in the amount pledged. The state program that selects these nonprofits is

called “Pick. Click. Give.” (PCG). The amount pledged is then sent to the nonprofit by PCG about a month after the state’s PFD distributions.

PCG’s website contains a roster of 471 Alaskan and Alaskan affiliate nonprofits. PCG was created in May of 2008 by House Bill 166, and was implemented during the 2009 PFD application cycle. “The Law,” 2013, available at <http://www.pickclickgive.org/index.cfm>. Also known as the PFD Charitable Contributions Program, PCG is essentially a state-run fundraising tool for nonprofits that meet these requirements: a 501(c)(3) organization (for at least two years); receiving more than 5% of its income from contributions; and has served Alaskans during the preceding two years with a majority of Alaskans on its (voluntary) Board of Directors. “PFD Charitable Contributions Program FAQ’s – Pick. Click. Give.” Alaska Department of Revenue, Permanent Fund Division, 2012, available at <http://pfd.alaska.gov/home/Charitable>, last visited Oct. 10, 2013. This year, Alaskans donated 2.4 million dollars to local charities through the PCG online program. “Press,” Pick. Click. Give. available at <http://www.pickclickgive.org/index.cfm/press/Current-Press/769> last visited Oct. 10, 2013.

As state, local, and even federal functions become more internet-dependent (and people become internet-literate), governments can help funnel money into the nonprofit sector through programs like PCG, thus allowing nonprofits to receive more money than they would without such a program. If the IRS will soon be able to help us apply for 501(c)(3) status online, perhaps a program like PCG can be implemented to help Americans donate our tax refunds to local and national nonprofit organizations while preserving a nonprofit’s independence and autonomy from government control and encouraging a healthy, well funded nonprofit sector.

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