

Charity monitoring must be tightened, Liberal MHA says

Recent auditor general's report found lax regulations on charitable fundraising in province

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Liberal MHA Randy Edmunds wants action to tighten oversight of charity fundraising, in the wake of a critical report by the auditor general.

The provincial government is under fire for lax regulations on charitable fundraising, and a Liberal MHA wants action on the issue.

The recent auditor general's report found that many of the rules are not always followed. Groups used charity money to pay for overhead. And three groups even ran illegal lotteries.

Liberal MHA Randy Edmunds says the province has to tighten up its monitoring and its rules.

"Service Newfoundland really needs to look at bringing up some standards, new standards, and hiring an auditor within the department that's been vacant for the last four years to oversee the provincial lottery licensing system," Edmunds said.

Edmunds stresses that the entire point of the provincial bingo and lottery system is to provide funds for qualified charities. That, he said, means the province must closely monitor and audit the entire licensing process.

Edmunds said the Liberals tried to look into provincial lottery licences in 2010 through an access-to-information request. But the department said at the time it had no records.

He is critical of what he calls the government's "obsession with secrecy."