

“NON-PROFITS REACH OUT TO PUBLIC FOR SUPPORT!”

By Lawrence Messina—Associated Press Writer

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) -- Public employees who support nonprofit environmental and social services causes have a new way to show it.

State workers can now dedicate a portion of their paychecks toward groups that have formed Community Shares of West Virginia. Higher education employees are also eligible for the program.

The coalition represents nine organizations: the American Friends Service Committee Economic Justice Project, Family Leadership First, Mountain State Education and Research Fund, Ohio Valley Environmental Council, the Southern Appalachian Labor School, Step by Step, the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, the West Virginia Ministry of Advocacy and Work-camps, and the West Virginia Rivers Coalition.

“It really exemplifies what can be done when nonprofits come together to work for the common good,” said Gary Zuckett, a coalition member.

The groups will normally share all payroll deductions equally, though employees can earmark amounts for specific groups. Workers can also pledge part of their paychecks toward nonprofit groups that are not part of Community Shares, and any deduction can be canceled at any time.

Zuckett said similar nonprofit groups raise funds through payroll deductions in 28 other states.

Gov. Joe Manchin dubbed Thursday “Community Shares Kick-off Day” to show support for the effort.