

Komen Breast Cancer Charity Cancels Walks in 7 US Cities

Breast cancer charity Susan G. Komen for the Cure, which suffered a publicity backlash last year after it sought to cut funding to **Planned Parenthood**, said on Tuesday it was canceling fundraising walks next year in seven cities where money goals have not been met.

The organization, which says it is the largest non-government funder of breast cancer research, said it was cutting three-day walks for 2014 in Phoenix, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Tampa Bay, San Francisco and Washington. The event will continue in seven other places.

"The difficult decision to exit these markets was not made lightly, as we know this bold and empowering event has touched the lives of thousands of participants like you," the Dallas-based group said in a message on its Facebook page.

A Komen spokeswoman said in an email that participation in the three-day walks declined by 37 percent in the past four years, without specifying whether that was the number of participants or dollars raised. The group decided to remove the cities from next year's schedule that have not been meeting fundraising goals, the spokeswoman said.

It was unclear what the group's fundraising targets were for the walks. Each participant is required to raise a minimum of \$2,300 and walks about 60 miles over the three days.

The charity sparked an outcry last year when it said it would cut funding to Planned Parenthood, a provider of birth control, abortion and other women's health services.

Komen, which supports Planned Parenthood's efforts to provide access to breast-cancer screening, reversed that decision

within days and said it would restore the funding.

After the controversy, several of the group's leaders stepped down, and the group's founder, Nancy Brinker, stepped down as CEO, though she continued to hold a management role.

Brinker founded the organization in 1982, two years after her sister, Susan G. Komen, died of breast cancer.

Komen's signature event is the Race for the Cure, which includes 5 kilometers and marathon races as well as the walks. The group says the events involve more than 1.7 million participants each year.

Komen will continue to hold walks in Atlanta, Dallas/Fort Worth, Michigan, Philadelphia, San Diego, Seattle and Minneapolis-St. Paul.

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