

# Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship

UPDATED June 1, 2018

The Honorable Mike Quigley  
2458 Rayburn House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Quigley:

The undersigned organizations strongly oppose proposals that would politicize the charitable nonprofit and philanthropic community by repealing or weakening current federal tax law protections that prohibit 501(c)(3) organizations from endorsing, opposing, or contributing to political candidates.

Nonpartisanship is a cornerstone principle that has strengthened the public's trust of the charitable community. In exchange for enjoying tax-exempt status and the ability to receive tax-deductible contributions, 501(c)(3) organizations – charitable nonprofits, including religious congregations, and foundations – agree to not engage in “any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.”

That provision of law protects the integrity and independence of charitable nonprofits and foundations. It shields the entire 501(c)(3) community against the rancor of partisan politics so the charitable community can be a safe haven where individuals of all beliefs come together to solve community problems free from partisan divisions. It screens out doubts and suspicions regarding ulterior partisan motives of charitable organizations, as undoubtedly would occur if even just a few charitable organizations engaged in partisan politics. Nonpartisan credibility is critical to the ability of 501(c)(3) organizations to work with elected officials of all parties at the local, state, and federal levels to address community needs.

Charitable nonprofits, including religious congregations, are free to speak on important matters of the day and advocate on public policy issues and legislation. Private foundations, while barred from most lobbying activities, are free to engage in public debates, promote public education efforts, and fund a wide range of issue-focused activities. The relevant language in Section 501(c)(3) merely prohibits partisan campaign intervention, defined to include endorsing or opposing candidates for public office, publishing or distributing statements for or against candidates, or using tax-deductible and other resources to support partisan campaign activities.

We are united in opposing any and all efforts to weaken or repeal this longstanding protection in the federal tax code (sometimes called the Johnson Amendment) that President Eisenhower signed into law in 1954. Weakening the law by allowing leaders of individual 501(c)(3) entities to endorse candidates for public office and engage in some partisan electioneering activities would damage the integrity and effectiveness of all charitable organizations and spawn litigation as innovative partisans seek to expand gray areas in the proposed legislation. Repealing the Johnson Amendment, an approach promoted by the President and some in Congress, would damage the federal Treasury as people take tax deductions for political contributions they could then funnel through charitable nonprofits, undercut fair elections by providing a loophole to avoid campaign contribution disclosure laws, and empower politicians to exert pressure for access to foundation assets and charitable funds for their own partisan campaigns rather than for the public good.

We urge you to join us in opposing efforts to weaken and/or repeal the current law that for six decades has successfully protected the integrity and effectiveness of charitable nonprofits and foundations by keeping them apart from partisan politics.

Respectfully,

<b>Illinois</b>			
826CHI	Chicago	Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of Illinois	Springfield
Aging Care Connections	La Grange	CommunityHealth	Chicago
AIDS Foundation of Chicago	Chicago	Conant Family Foundation	Chicago
Allow Good	Chicago	Concordia Place	Chicago
Alternatives, Inc.	Chicago	Connections for the Homeless	Evanston
American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons	Chicago	Creative Partners	Chicago
American Medical Association Foundation	Chicago	Cristo Rey St. Martin College Prep	Waukegan
Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation	Northbrook	Deborah's Place	Chicago
Arts Alliance Illinois	Chicago	Divine Sparks	Chicago
Association of Fundraising Professionals - Chicago IL Chapter	Chicago	Duke of Edinburgh's International Award USA	
Baker McGee Consulting	Chicago	DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform	Lombard
Ballet 5:8	Chicago	Ecker Center for Mental Health	Elgin
Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago	Chicago	Embarc	Chicago
Bridge Communities	Glen Ellyn	Erie Family Health Center	Chicago
Bright Promise Fund for Urban Christian Education	Chicago	Erie Neighborhood House	Chicago
Career Resource Center	Lake Forest	Evanston Community Foundation	Evanston
Center for Independence Through Conductive Education	Western Springs	Evanston Symphony Orchestra Association	Evanston
Center for Independent Futures	Evanston	Executive Service Corps of Chicago	Chicago
Central States SER	Chicago	Facing Forward to End Homelessness	Chicago
Chicago Botanic Garden	Glencoe	Family Bridges	Oakbrook Terrace
Chicago Community Loan Fund	Chicago	Family Focus	Chicago
Chicago Cultural Alliance	Chicago	Family Health Partnership Clinic	Crystal Lake
Chicago Dramatists	Chicago	Family Service and Mental Health Center of Cicero	Cicero
Chicago Global Health Alliance	Chicago	Forefront	Chicago
Chicago Humanities Festival	Chicago	Friends of Downtown	Chicago
Chicago Run	60618	Friends of the Chicago River	
Chicago Urban League	Chicago	Gene Siskel Film Center	Chicago
Child Care Center of Evanston	Evanston	George M. Pullman Educational Foundation	
Children's Home Society of America	Chicago	Global Philanthropy Partnership	Chicago
Children's Neuroblastoma Cancer Foundation	Bloomington	GrantResources, LLC	
Children's Place Association	Chicago		
Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust	Elgin		
College Bound Opportunities	Riverwoods		

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**Illinois**

Greater Chicago Food Depository	Chicago	Mission of Our Lady of Mercy, Inc.	Chicago
Growing Home, Inc.	Chicago	Mom2MomDG	
Habitat for Humanity Chicago	Chicago	Mutual Ground, Inc.	Aurora
Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County	Mahomet	Naper Settlement	Naperville
Habitat for Humanity of Northern Fox Valley		National Louis University	Chicago
Harris Theater for Music and Dance	Chicago	National Runaway Safeline	Chicago
High Concept Labs	Chicago	NextLevelNPO, LLC	Chicago
Historic Chicago Bungalow Association	Chicago	Nineteenth Century Charitable Association	
Holy Family Ministries	Lincolnshire	Nonprofit-Partners	Forest Park
Housing Institute	Bolingbrook	Northern Illinois Center for Nonprofit Excellence	Rockford
Housing Opportunities & Maintenance for the Elderly (H.O.M.E.)	Chicago	Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry	Oak Park
Hyde Park Art Center	Chicago	Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation	Oak Park
Illinois Association of Museums	Springfield	Palatine Township Senior Citizens Council	Palatine
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Springfield	PATH, Inc.	Bloomington
Illinois Collaboration on Youth	Chicago	Pierce Family Foundation	
Illinois Refugee and Immigrants Community Services	Skokie	Pillars	LaGrange Park
Illinois Tech Global Leaders Program	Chicago	Polk Bros. Foundation	Chicago
IL-WI Sertoma Regional Center for Communicative Disorders	Palos Hills	Prevention Partnership, Inc.	Chicago
Iris Krieg & Associates, Inc.	Chicago	QC Arts	Rock Island
JHR Resources	Chicago	Quarles & Brady LLP	
JOURNEYS   The Road Home	Palatine	RAD Remedy	Chicago
KCCDD	Galesburg	S. Wolf and Associates	Chicago
Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago	Glenview	Schild Family Foundation	Wilmette
Land Conservancy of Will County	Frankfort	Severson Dells Educational Foundation	Rockford
Latino Policy Forum	Chicago	Shelter Care Ministries	Rockford
Leukemia Research Foundation		Sherrie Marchi Coaching	Palatine
Levine Partners	Evanston	Social Venture Partners Chicago	Chicago
Life Quilt Foundation	Chicago	Springfield Area Arts Council	Springfield
Lincoln Park Zoo	Chicago	St. Helena's Church	Burr Ridge
Lumity	Chicago	Swan Isle Press	Chicago
Lyons Township Mental Health Commission		TeenyBig	
McAlpine Consulting for Growth, LLC	Chicago	Temaner and Associates	Chicago
Mercy Home for Boys & Girls	Chicago	The Association of Consultants to Nonprofits	Chicago
MindsEye Radio	Belleville	The Chicago Music Consortium	Bolingbrook
		The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust	Chicago
		The Friendship Center	Chicago
		The Harbour	Park Ridge
		The Junior League of Chicago	Chicago
		The Land Conservancy of McHenry County	Woodstock

The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation	Chicago	American Podiatric Medical Association, Inc.
The Seabury Foundation	Chicago	American Red Cross
United Way of Illinois	Chicago	Americans for the Arts
US Green Building Council	Hoffman Estates	Americans Promoting Study Abroad
Us TOO International	Des Plaines	Americans United for Separation of Church and State
Victory House, Discipleship for Women		Amyloidosis Foundation
VNA Foundation	Chicago	Animal Legal Defense Fund
Volunteers of America of Illinois	Chicago	Annie E. Casey Foundation
Waukegan to College	Waukegan	Anti-Defamation League
Webster-Cantrell Hall	Decatur	Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
Westlawn Youth Network	Chicago	Association for Jewish Outreach Professionals
Wheat Ridge Ministries	Oak Park	Association of American Colleges and Universities
Wishnick & Associates	Chicago	Association of Art Museum Directors
Writers Theatre Inc.	Glencoe	Association of Direct Response Fundraising Counsel
Youth and Opportunity United	Evanston	Association of Fundraising Professionals
Youth Outlook	Naperville	Association of Immunization Managers
Youth Outreach Services, Inc.	Chicago	Association of Nature Center Administrators
YWCA - Canton	Canton	Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice
YWCA - Elgin	Elgin	Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty
YWCA - Kankakee	Kankakee	Baptist Women in Ministry
YWCA of the University of Illinois	Champaign	Barr Foundation
ZION Development Corporation	Rockford	BoardSource

**National Organizations**

Abila		Camp Fire
Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education, Inc.		Campion Foundation
AdoptAClassroom.org		Catholic Charities USA
African Diaspora United, Inc.		Catholic Mobilizing Network
Alliance for Strong Families and Communities		Celiac Disease Foundation
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation		Center for Health, Environment & Justice
America Solidaria U.S.		Center for Inquiry
American Alliance of Museums		Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
American Association of Anatomists		Citizen Schools
American Association of Physics Teachers		CleanSlateNow
American Association of Teachers of German		Common Cause
American Atheists		Commonwealth Fund
American Bladder Cancer Society		Council on Foundations
American Board of Venous & Lymphatic Medicine		Council for Global Equality
American Brass Chamber Music Association		Dance USA
American Conference of Academic Deans		Dementia Society, Inc.
American Heart Association		Democracy 21
American Historical Association		Destination & Travel Foundation
American Jewish Committee		Dietel Partners, LLC
American Medical Association Foundation		Disability Rights Advocacy Fund
American Physiological Society		Easter Seals
		Ecology Project International
		Engineering Conferences International

Episcopal Relief & Development  
Feed the Children  
Feeding America  
Fidesco USA  
Food & Water Watch  
Ford Foundation  
Free Press  
Girl Scouts of the USA  
Girls Inc.  
Global Integrity  
Goodwill Industries International, Inc.  
Grantmakers for Effective Organizations  
Greater Nonprofits  
GuideStar  
Habitat for Humanity International  
Harbor Compliance  
HawkWatch International  
Hindu American Foundation  
Histiocytosis Foundation  
Horizons National  
Human Science Institute  
Independent Sector  
International Essential Tremor Foundation  
International Hearing Dog, Inc.  
International Performing Arts for Youth  
International Primate Protection League  
Issue One  
Jessie Ball DuPont Fund  
Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
Jewish Federations of North America  
Leadership USA  
League of American Orchestras  
League of Women Voters  
Leukemia Research Foundation  
Local Learning: The National Network for Folk Arts in Education  
Lumina Foundation  
Lymphoma Foundation of America  
Migraine Research Foundation  
Millennium Water Alliance  
Mentors International  
Morino Ventures, LLC  
National 4-H Council  
National Alliance of Community Economic Development  
National Association of Charitable Gift Planners  
National Association of Health Data Organizations  
National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA)  
National Association of Watch and Collectors  
National Association for Shoplifting Prevention  
NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Center for Appropriate Technology  
National Center for Fire and Life Safety  
National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome  
National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy  
National Council of Behavioral Health  
National Council of Churches  
National Council of Nonprofits  
National Council of Tribes  
National Dance Education Organization  
National Hartford Centers of Gerontological Nursing Excellence  
National Human Services Assembly  
National Indian Child Welfare Association  
National LGBTQ Task Force  
National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation  
National Runaway Safeline  
National Safe Place Network  
National Tongan American Society  
NEO Law Group  
North American Bramble Growers Research Foundation  
OPERA America  
Partnership for America's Children  
Pension Fund of the Christian Church  
Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement  
Project Wet Foundation  
Project Managers Without Borders  
Public Citizen  
Rockefeller Brothers Fund  
Secular Coalition for America  
Senior Executives Association  
Seva Foundation  
Skillman Foundation  
Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
Smith's Food and Drug  
Social Velocity  
The Arc of the United States  
The Aspen Institute  
The Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc.  
The Commonwealth Fund  
The Dibble Institute  
The Educational Foundation of America  
The George Gund Foundation  
The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi  
The Michael J. Fox Foundation

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Illinois

The Ocean Foundation  
The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation  
The United Methodist Church – General  
Board of Church and Society  
The Voter Participation Center  
TIDES  
Unemployment Services Trust  
Union for Reform Judaism  
United Philanthropy Forum  
United Soldiers and Sailors of America  
United Way Worldwide  
University Professional & Continuing  
Education Association  
US Lacrosse  
Vasculitis Foundation  
Volunteers in Medicine  
Volunteers of America  
Voto Latino  
Wallace Global Fund  
WasteWater Education  
Weingart Foundation  
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation  
Words Without Borders  
World Day of Prayer USA  
World Neighbors, Inc.  
Youth Services America  
YWCA USA