The Honorable Ruben Gallego
1218 Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gallego:

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,

Arizona

501 Navigation Tucson
A Stepping Stone Phoenix
Foundation
Advanced Independence Sun City
Charity Phoenix
Alan R Davidson, PLLC Phoenix
Alliance of Arizona
Nonprofits
Allied Arts Council Lake Havasu City
Arizona Alzheimer's Research and Tucson
Prevention Foundation Phoenix
American Heart Association Tucson
Archaeology Southwest Phoenix
Arizona Autism United Phoenix
Arizona Center for the Blind Phoenix
and Visually Impaired Phoenix
Arizona Community Foundation Phoenix
Arizona Council of Human Phoenix
Service Providers Phoenix
Arizona Family Planning Phoenix
Council, Inc.
Arizona Grantmakers Forum Phoenix
Arizona Hispanic Chamber Phoenix
of Commerce Phoenix
Arizona Humanities Phoenix
Arizona YWCA Metropolitan Phoenix
Phoenix
Arts for All, Inc.
Ascension Lutheran Church Phoenix
Assist To Independence Phoenix
Association of Arizona Food Phoenix
Banks Phoenix
AZ Meds for Vets Phoenix
Backpacks 4 Kids AZ, Inc. Phoenix
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Phoenix
Tucson
Bisbee Restoration Phoenix
Association and Historical Phoenix
Society (Museum), Inc.
Black Canyon Historical Phoenix
Society Phoenix
Boxer Luv Rescue Phoenix

Boys & Girls Club of Kingman
Kingman
Brain Injury Alliance of Phoenix
Arizona
Business Mentor Team Scottsdale
Cancer Survivors Circle of Phoenix
Strength of AZ Phoenix
Caritas Law Group, PC Tempe
Cave Creek Museum Glendale
Celebrate Volunteers Chandler
Center Stage Chandler
Communications Chandler
Central Arizona Shelter Phoenix
Services Phoenix
Chandler Symphony Chandler
Orchestra Chandler
Child and Family Resources, Phoenix
Inc.
Child Crisis Arizona Tucson
Children's Action Alliance Mesa
Childsplay Tempe
Chrysalis Shelter for Victims Phoenix
of Domestic Violence, Inc.
Circle the City Phoenix
Cochise Canine Rescue Benson
Community Foundation for Tucson
Southern Arizona Tucson
Compass Affordable Tucson
Housing, Inc.
Cornucopia Community Sedona
Advocates
Courtney's Place Scottsdale
Creating the Future Tucson
Cultural Arts Coalition Tempe
D'Artz International Scottsdale
Downtown Radio
Drowning Prevention Phoenix
Coalition of Arizona Phoenix
Eagles Wings of Grace, Int'l.
Tucson
Earn to Learn Tucson
Elfrida Citizens Alliance Inc.
Elfrida
Empower International Gilbert
Eve's Place, Inc. Phoenix
Flagstaff Shakespeare Flagstaff
Festival
| Flinn Foundation | ONE - The Organization for Nonprofit Executives |
| Friends of Navajo County Anti-Drug Coalition, Inc. | Phoenix |
| Friends of the Library - Kingman | Our Family Services |
| Friends of the San Pedro River | Our Neighbors Farm & Pantry |
| Gabriel's Angels | Phxca, Inc. |
| Global Youth Delegation For Peace and Tolerance | Positive Paths |
| Graceful Fundraising, LLC Grants On Track, LLC | Prescott Meals On Wheels |
| Heritage Designs | Protecting Arizona's Family Coalition |
| HR Foundations AZ | Raise the Bar Consulting |
| ICM Food & Clothing Bank Inspired Connections | Read Better Be Better |
| It Is, Inc. d/b/a 'Tis Jewish Free Loan | ReInventing ReEntry |
| Kingdom Philanthropy Lead for Change | Rossetti Consulting Group |
| Leading For Change Lighthouse Christian Community Church | Rotary Club of Tucson #1284 |
| Literacy Connects Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest | Saguaro Foundation Community Living Programs |
| Living Streets Alliance LPFM Downtown Tucson | Santa Cruz Grants & Consulting, LLC |
| Metropolitan Education Commission | Save the Family Foundation of AZ |
| Mi Familia Vota Education Fund Make Way for Books Mesa United Way | Sky Island Alliance |
| Mi Familia Vota Education Fund Commission | Smith & Dale Philanthropic Counsel |
| Mount Zion Church | Sonoran Glass School |
| My Heart His Palace Christian International Ministries | Southeast Arizona Area Health Education Center, SEAHEC, Inc. |
| NAMI Southern Arizona Native Seeds/SEARCH Neighbors Who Care, Inc. Network Life, LLC | St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance |
| Neurofit Networks NPC Friends and Family Old Pueblo Community Services | Stardust Non-Profit Building Supplies |
| Sue Sirkus, CFRE Sustainable Economic Development Initiative of Northern Arizona | Strategy + |
| Take Charge America, Inc. TechTHiNQ | Action/Philanthropy |
| Teen Outreach Pregnancy Services | Mesa |
| The Bidstrup Foundation The Cagney Company The David and Lura Lovell Foundation | Tempe |
| Arizona City | Paradise Valley |
Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship

The Hearth Foundation Tucson
The New Foundation Scottsdale
Theatre Artists Studio Phoenix
Trellis Phoenix
Triple Stone Education Support Phoenix
Tucson Foundations Tucson
Tucson Urban League Tucson
Urbanly DIVA, Inc. Phoenix
Vitalyst Health Foundation Phoenix
Warehouse Arts Management Organization Tucson
West Greenway Bible Church Tucson
WHEAT, the World Hunger Education, Advocacy & Training organization Phoenix
World Youth Visit and Exchange of Arizona Phoenix
Yavapai Food Council Sedona
Young Artist Society Mesa

National Organizations

Abila
Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education, Inc.
AdoptAClassroom.org
Alliance for Strong Families and Communities
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
America Solidaria U.S.
American Alliance of Museums
American Association of Anatomists
American Association of Physics Teachers
American Association of Teachers of German
American Atheists
American Bladder Cancer Society
American Board of Venous & Lymphatic Medicine
American Brass Chamber Music Association
American Conference of Academic Deans
American Heart Association
American Historical Association
American Jewish Committee
American Medical Association Foundation
American Physiological Society
American Podiatric Medical Association, Inc.
American Red Cross
Americans for the Arts
Americans Promoting Study Abroad
Americans United for Separation of Church and State
Amyloidosis Foundation
Animal Legal Defense Fund
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Anti-Defamation League
Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
Association for Jewish Outreach Professionals
Association of American Colleges and Universities
Association of Art Museum Directors
Association of Direct Response Fundraising Counsel
Association of Fundraising Professionals
Association of Immunization Managers
Association of Nature Center Administrators
Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice
Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty
Baptist Women in Ministry
Barr Foundation
BoardSource
Brady Campaign and Center to Prevent Gun Violence
Camp Fire
Campion Foundation
Catholic Charities USA
Catholic Mobilizing Network
Center for Health, Environment & Justice
Center for Inquiry
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
Citizen Schools
CleanSlateNow
Commonwealth Fund
Council on Foundations
Council for Global Equality
Dance USA
Dementia Society, Inc.
Democracy 21
Destination & Travel Foundation
Dietel Partners, LLC
Disability Rights Advocacy Fund
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.
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