Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship
UPDATED September 5, 2017

The Honorable Tim J. Ryan
1126 Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Ryan:

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,

Ohio

Action for Children  Columbus
Affecting Community  Columbus
Transformation d/b/a  Seattle
Oasis House  Dayton
Aikey Foundation, Inc.  Wellington
Akron Community Foundation  Akron
Arthur Morgan Institute for Community Solutions  Yellow Springs
Bethany House Services  Cincinnati
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Shelby & Darke County  Sidney
Bryan Area Foundation  Bryan
Business for Peace Community Development Foundation (B4P CODEFOUND)  Blacklick
Cancer Patient Services  Findlay
Circle of Peace International  Marietta
City Year Columbus  Columbus
Clark County Historical Society  Springfield
Cleveland Zoological Society  Cleveland
Cogswell Hall, Inc.  Columbus
Columbus School for Girls  Columbus
Community Foundation of Lorain County  Elyria
Community Kitchen  Columbus
Corporation for Findlay Market  Cincinnati
Corporation for Ohio Appalachian Development  Lima
Crime Victim Services  Dayton
Daybreak  Dayton
Dayton Foundation  Dayton
Disability Foundation, Inc.  Dayton
Dobama Theatre  Cleveland Heights
Dublin Arts Council  Dublin
E&L Company  Youngstown
Early Childhood Resource Center  Canton
Easter Seals Serving Greater Cincinnati  Cincinnati
Edheads  Hilliard

Equitas Health  Columbus
Far West Center  Westlake
Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center  Chagrin Falls
Food For Thought  Toledo
Franciscan Earth Literacy Center  Tiffin
Friends of the Cultural Arts Center  Columbus
Glacity Theatre Collective  Columbus
Goodwill Columbus  West Liberty
Green Hills Community  Cincinnati
Habitat for Humanity of Greater Cincinnati  Columbus
Habitat for Humanity, Mid-Ohio  Columbus
Hannah's Treasure Chest  Centerville
Harmony Project  Columbus
Havar, Inc.  Athens
Homeport  Columbus
House of New Hope  Saint Louisville
Housing Research & Advocacy Center  Cleveland
Humility of Mary Housing  Granville
Jarvis Gibson Foundation  Hamilton
Kendal at Granville  Rocky River
Lake Erie Swimming  Dayton
LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland  Cleveland
LifeSpan  Toledo
Mobile Meals of Toledo, Inc.  Morino Ventures, LLC
Multifaith Campus Alliance of the Miami Valley  Newport
Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Cleveland  Springfield
Newark-Granville Symphony Orchestra  Newark
Non Profit Evolution  Columbus
Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies  Columbus
Ohio Association of Foodbanks  Columbus
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ohio Association of Nonprofit Organizations - OANO</th>
<th>Columbus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ohio CDC Association</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Domestic Violence Network</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Environmental Council</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio League For Nursing</td>
<td>North Olmsted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Valley Recovery Incorporated</td>
<td>Bridgeport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry County Soccer League</td>
<td>Crooksville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropy Ohio</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred Properties, Inc.</td>
<td>Toledo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate</td>
<td>Bratenahl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sears-Swetland Family Foundation</td>
<td>Tiffin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeds of Hope</td>
<td>Delphos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sisters of St. Francis</td>
<td>Tiffin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Francis Spirituality Center</td>
<td>Bucyrus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonewall Columbus</td>
<td>Dayton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StriveTogether</td>
<td>Dayton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Cheeks Diaper Bank</td>
<td>Beachwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Central Ohio Symphony</td>
<td>Cleveland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Community Foundation for Crawford County</td>
<td>Bucyrus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dakota Center</td>
<td>Dayton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Foodbank, Inc.</td>
<td>Dayton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gathering Place</td>
<td>Beachwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The George Gund Foundation</td>
<td>Cleveland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problem Gambling Network of Ohio</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sindisa Fund</td>
<td>Hillsboro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The UpTown Association, Inc.</td>
<td>Toledo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo Ballet</td>
<td>Toledo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo Community Foundation</td>
<td>Toledo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions, Inc.</td>
<td>Zanesville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Disability Services</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way of Gallia County</td>
<td>Gallipolis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way of Greater Cleveland</td>
<td>Cleveland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way of Medina County</td>
<td>Medina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way of Summit County</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way of Williams County</td>
<td>Bryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way of Williams County</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSA Ohio</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Side Catholic Center</td>
<td>Cleveland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WomenSafe</td>
<td>Chardon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YWCA Alliance</td>
<td>Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YWCA Dayton</td>
<td>Dayton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YWCA Greater Cincinnati</td>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YWCA of Hamilton, OH</td>
<td>West Chester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YWCA Warren</td>
<td>Warren</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.
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
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
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 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