

# Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship

UPDATED September 5, 2017

The Honorable Daniel M. Newhouse  
1318 Longworth House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Newhouse:

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>Washington</b>			
501 Commons	Seattle	Clallam Mosaic	Port Angeles
7028 Life Enhancement Charitable Trust	Seattle	COMIA Foundation	Cheney
Account for Your Health	Everett	Committee for Children	Pullman
ACS - Washington	Federal Way	Community Action Center	Bellevue
Advancement Consulting	Tacoma	Congregations for the Homeless	Seattle
Allison Carney Consulting	Seattle	Conservation Northwest	
Alternatives to Violence of the Palouse	Pullman	Cooper Spur Wild and Free Coalition	Vancouver
Amigas De Corazon	Spokane	Coral	
Anderson Foundation for the Arts	Walla Walla	Crainix Brain Health Institute	
Art with Heart	Seattle	Danza Classica Ballet Foundation	Walla Walla
Arts Corps	Seattle	Dispute Resolution Center of Kitsap County	Silverdale
Asian Counseling & Referral Service	Seattle	ECHHO (Ecumenical Christian Helping Hands Organization)	Port Townsend
Backbone Campaign	Vashon	Environmental Science Center	Burien
	Bainbridge Island	Faith Action Network	Seattle
Bainbridge Chorale	Bellingham	Faith In Action West Sound	Belfair
Bellingham Girls Rock Camp	Seattle	First Taiwanese Presbyterian Church	Seattle
Bet Alef Meditative Synagogue	Seattle	Flight Club Foundation	Auburn
Birch Consulting	Vancouver	Forest and Sequoia Foundations	Tacoma
Blue Mountain Humane Society	Walla Walla	Foundation for Healthy Generations	Seattle
Blueprints for Learning	Spokane	Foundation for International Understanding Through Students	Seattle
Boys & Girls Clubs of King County	Seattle	Foundation for Sex Positive Culture	Seattle
Braided River	Seattle	Fountain of Life Foundation	Milton
Brigid Collins Family Support Center	Bellingham	Freedom Project	Seattle
Bullitt Foundation	Seattle	Friends of Lopez Island Pool	Lopez Island
Camp Fire Samish and Camp Kirby	Bellingham	Friends of the Carpenter	Vancouver
Campion Foundation	Seattle	Full Circle Equine Rehabilitation Center	Colbert
CascadiaNow!	Seattle	Fund Momentum, LLC	Seattle
Cedarmere Foundation	Seattle	Furry Friends	Vancouver
Center for Justice	Spokane	Genetic Support Foundation	Olympia
Centerforce		Girl Scouts of Western Washington	Seattle
Centerpoint Institute	Bellevue	Grace Baptist Church	University Place
Charitable Humans	Bothell	Granite Falls Community Coalition	
Chehalis River Basin Land Trust		Coalition Food Bank	Granite Falls
Child Care Aware of WA	Tacoma	Greater Gig Harbor Foundation	Gig Harbor
Child Care Resources	Seattle		
Children's Home Society of Washington			
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Greater Lynchburg Community Trust	Lynchburg	Lopez Island Historical Society, Freedom From Religion Foundation, American Humanists	Lopez Island
Gwaan Hai, LLC	Bellevue	Mangrove Action Project	Seattle
Habitat for Humanity - Colville Valley Partners	Colville	Mannix Canby Foundation	Seattle
Habitat for Humanity - Spokane	Spokane	Many Lights Foundation	Newcastle
Habitat for Humanity of Kitsap County		Martial Arts in the Public Interest	Seattle
Habitat for Humanity of Washington State	Tacoma	Mary's Place Seattle	Seattle
Habitat for Humanity Seattle-King County	Seattle	Master Gardener Foundation of Benton Franklin County	Richland
Health and Hope Medical Outreach	Centralia	Master Gardener Foundation of Clark County	Ridgefield
Healthy Youth Alliance		Meade B Thayer LLC	Seattle
Heartlinks Hospice & Palliative Care	Sunnyside	Michael's Caterpillar	Seattle
Helpline	Walla Walla	Motley Zoo Animal Rescue	Redmond
Homage Senior Services	Everett	Mount Vernon Downtown Association	Mount Vernon
HomeFront Therapies		MSplus Foundation	Olympia
Homes First	Olympia	NAMI Washington	Seattle
Homeward Pet Adoption Center		Native Arts and Cultures Foundation	
HopeSparks Family Services	Tacoma	Nature 4 All	Maple Valley
HopeWorks Social Enterprises	Everett	Nexus Youth and Families Nonprofit & Philanthropy Resource Center	Auburn
Inland Northwest Nonprofit Consulting		Nonprofit Network SWWA	Redmond
Intermountain Impact Investments	Walla Walla	Nonprofit Performance Partners, LLC	Vancouver
International Community Health Services	Ken	North Cascades Conservation Council	Redmond
Invest in Youth	Seattle	North Helpline	Seattle
Island County Historical Society	Coupeville	Northwest Association for Biomedical Research	Seattle
Island Hospital Foundation	Anacortes	Northwest Children's Fund NPO	Kirkland
Job Carr Cabin Museum	Tacoma	NW Children's Fund	Seattle
Josephine Caring Community in Stanwood WA	Mount Vernon	NW Financial Fitness Training	Kelso
Key Peninsula Community Services		Olympic View Community Foundation	Sequim
Kirkpatrick Family Foundation	Seattle	One Equal Heart Foundation	Seattle
Kittitas County Habitat for Humanity	Ellensburg	Open Arms Perinatal Services	Seattle
KMRE Community Radio	Bellingham	Orcas Island Community Foundation	Eastsound
Knitting Humanity Together	Kent	Orting Food Bank	Orting
Kulshan Community Land Trust	Bellingham	Our Literacy Council of Lewis County	Centralia
Laura Pierce Consulting	Seattle	Page Ahead Children's Literacy Program	Seattle
League of Women Voters of Washington	Seattle	Parentworks.com	
Leahy Consulting	Sammamish	Pateros Brewster Community Resource Center	Pateros
Legal Voice	Seattle		
Lewis County Literacy Council	Centralia		
LKA Fundraising & Communication	Seattle		

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Patuloy	Federal Way	Southwest Youth and Family	
Peoria Home	Everett	Services	Seattle
Phila Engaged Giving	Seattle	Spokane Area Jewish Family	
Philanthropy Northwest	Seattle	Services	Spokane
Phoenix Conservancy	Pullman	Spokane Hearing Oral Program	
Pierce County Labor Community		of Excellence (HOPE)	Spokane
Services Agency	Tacoma	Spokane Sports Commission	Spokane
Pomegranate Center		Stage West Community Theatre	Ocean Shores
Powerful Voices		Summit Assistance Dogs	
Pride Foundation	Seattle	Support Services for the	
Prime Time, Inc.	Yakima	Developmentally Disabled	
Progressive Animal Welfare		Sustainable Living Center	Walla Walla
Society	Lynnwood	Temple Beth Am	Seattle
Project id	Spokane	Terrain Programs	Spokane
Psychotherapy Cooperative	Seattle	The Boiler Room	Port Townsend
Race to Remember	Vancouver	The Harder Foundation	Tacoma
Rainbow Center	Tacoma	The Leading Edge	Seattle
Rainier Valley Corps	Seattle	The Museum of Flight	Seattle
Randall St Community Garden		The Mustard Seed Project of Key	
Rebuilding Together South		Peninsula	Vaughn
Sound	Tacoma	The Olympic Beacon Group	Copalis Crossing
Recovery Advocacy	Puyallup	The Organizations of Northeast	
Rooted Emerging		Spokane	Spokane
Sahsen Foundation		The Peg and Rick Young	
Salish School of Spokane	Spokane	Foundation	Seattle
Satterberg Foundation	Seattle	The Russell Family Foundation	Gig Harbor
Schools for Salone		The Sophia Way	Bellevue
Scout Finch Consulting	Seattle	The Successful Transition and	
Seattle Arts & Lectures	Seattle	Reentry (STAR) Project	Walla Walla
Seattle Foundation	Seattle	Tree of Life Sanctuary	Bellingham
Seattle Works	Seattle	Treehouse	Seattle
Seattle/King Co. Coalition on		Tri-Cities Food Bank	Richland
Homelessness	Seattle	Trout Lake Care, Inc.	Trout Lake
Shelter Bay Chorus	La Conner	Turning Pointe Domestic	
Sherwood Trust	Walla Walla	Violence Services	Shelton
Short Run Seattle	Seattle	United Way of Kitsap County	Bremerton
Sidney Museum and Arts		Upper Valley MEND	Leavenworth
Association		USA Softball of Washington State	Vancouver
Simkin Center at Bastyr		Valley Community Center	Clarkston
University		Valleyfest	Spokane Valley
Skagit Community Foundation	Mount Vernon	Vashon Interfaith Council To	
Skagit Fisheries Enhancement		Prevent Homelessness	Vashon Island
Group	Mount Vernon	Vision for Independence Center	
Skagit Habitat for Humanity	Mount Vernon	Volunteers of America Eastern	
Sno-Valley Senior Center	Carnation	Washington & North Idaho	Spokane
Society of St. Vincent de Paul	University Place	WA Appleseed	Seattle
Sound Generations	Seattle	Waitsburg Historical Society	Waitsburg
Sound Learning	Olympia	Walla Walla Community Hospice	Walla Walla
Sound Nonprofits	Tacoma	Walla Walla Valley Farm to	
Sound Salmon Solutions	Lake Stevens	School	
Southwest Spokane County		Walla Walla YWCA	
Historical Society	Cheney		

Washington Apple Education Foundation	Wenatchee	American Historical Association
Washington Federation of Animal Care and Control Agencies	Seattle	American Jewish Committee
Washington Nonprofits	Seattle	American Medical Association Foundation
Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility	Seattle	American Physiological Society
Washington State Nurses Foundation		American Podiatric Medical Association, Inc.
Washington Statewide Capacity Collaborative		American Red Cross
Weed Warriors, Nature Stewards Program	Burien	Americans for the Arts
Wenatchee River Institute	Leavenworth	Americans Promoting Study Abroad
Wenatchee Valley Humane Society	Wenatchee	Americans United for Separation of Church and State
Whatcom Community Foundation	Bellingham	Amyloidosis Foundation
Whidbey Children's Theater	Langley	Animal Legal Defense Fund
WhiteRock Consulting Group	Pullman	Annie E. Casey Foundation
Whitman County Humane Society	Pullman	Anti-Defamation League
Yakima Valley Community Foundation	Yakima	Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center
Yield to the King Ministry	Seattle	Association for Jewish Outreach Professionals
YMCA of the Inland Northwest		Association of American Colleges and Universities
YMCA of the Palouse	Pullman	Association of Art Museum Directors
YWCA Clark County	Vancouver	Association of Direct Response Fundraising Counsel
YWCA Kitsap County	Bremerton	Association of Fundraising Professionals
YWCA of Spokane	Spokane	Association of Immunization Managers
YWCA Olympia	Olympia	Association of Nature Center Administrators
YWCA Seattle   King   Snohomish		Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice

**National Organizations**

Abila		Catholic Charities USA
Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education, Inc.		Catholic Mobilizing Network
AdoptAClassroom.org		Center for Health, Environment & Justice
Alliance for Strong Families and Communities		Center for Inquiry
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation		Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
America Solidaria U.S.		Citizen Schools
American Alliance of Museums		CleanSlateNow
American Association of Anatomists		Commonwealth Fund
American Association of Physics Teachers		Council on Foundations
American Association of Teachers of German		Council for Global Equality
American Atheists		Dance USA
American Bladder Cancer Society		Dementia Society, Inc.
American Board of Venous & Lymphatic Medicine		Democracy 21
American Brass Chamber Music Association		Destination & Travel Foundation
American Conference of Academic Deans		Dietel Partners, LLC
American Heart Association		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

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**Washington**

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