The Honorable Jim Sensenbrenner  
2449 Rayburn House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  

Dear Representative Sensenbrenner:  

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,

Wisconsin

Advocates of Ozaukee
ArtWorks for Milwaukee
Association for Pelvic Organ Prolapse Support
AVK Education, Inc.
Biodynamic Association
Broadscope Disability Services
Brookhill Institute of Mathematics
Burleigh Street Community Development, Inc.
Center for Media and Democracy
Center for Veterans Issues, Ltd.
Chippewa Area Mentor Program
Chippewa Valley Museum
Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance
Common Ground Ministry, Inc.
Community Shares of Wisconsin
Comunidad
COPE Services
Covey
Cudahy-St. Francis Interfaith Difenbach Communications Strategies
Diverse and Resilient
Dolomite Marketing
Dominican Center
Door County Land Trust
Easter Seals Southeast Wisconsin
Ebenezer Child Care Centers, Inc.
ERAs Senior Network, Inc.
Ex Fabula
Feeding Wisconsin
Fond du Lac Area Foundation

Saukville
Mukwonago
Glendale
East Troy
Greenfield
Waukesha
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Madison
Whitefish Bay
Grafton
Allenton
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee

Fortunate Futures
Forward Community Investments
Freedom From Religion Foundation, Inc.
Garden District Neighborhood Association
Girl Scouts of Manitou Council
Good Friend, Inc.
Harbor House Crisis Shelters, A Ministry of Faith United Methodist Church
Hearthstone Historic House Museum
Howe Community Resource Center
Hunger Task Force
IN Progress Consulting LLC
IndependenceFirst
J B Plumping
JDC Solutions
Jean Gurney & Co. LLC
Jewish Community Relations Council of the Milwaukee Jewish Federation
Kathy's House
La Causa, Inc.
Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, Inc.
Madison Area Bus Advocates
Madison Ballet, Inc.
Madison Children's Museum
Madison Community Foundation
Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council
Milwaukee Center for Children and Youth, Inc.
Milwaukee City Council of PTAs, Inc.
Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity
Milwaukee Public Theatre

Milwaukee
Madison
Madison
Milwaukee
Sheboygan
Waukesha
Superior
Green Bay
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Shorewood
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee
Milwaukee

Moose International  
Mukwonago  
Muskego Senior Taxi  
Muskego  
Nativity Jesuit Academy  
Milwaukee  
Natural Heritage Land Trust, Inc.  
Madison  
Neighborhood House of Milwaukee  
Milwaukee  
NeighborWorks Blackhawk Region  
Beloit  
Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee  
Milwaukee  
North Country Independent Living  
superior  
Optimist Theatre  
Milwaukee  
Pathfinders Milwaukee, Inc.  
Milwaukee  
Penfield Children’s Center Project Concern  
St. Francis  
Project Concern of Cudahy-St. Francis  
Cudahy  
Racine Community Foundation  
Racine  
Rare & Undiagnosed Network  
Delafield  
River Falls Community Food Pantry  
River Falls  
Royal Academy of Dance  
Milwaukee  
Savage Support Corp  
Milwaukee  
Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin  
Madison  
Skylight Music Theatre  
Milwaukee  
Spectrum Nonprofit Services  
Milwaukee  
Spotted Eagle, Inc.  
Milwaukee  
Stepping Stone Farms School of Horsemanship  
Franksville  
Stepping Stones of Dunn County  
Menomonie  
The Addiction Resource Council, Inc.  
Waukesha  
The Center: 7 Rivers LGBTQ Connection  
La Crosse  
The Rainbow Project, Inc.  
Milwaukee  
Child & Family Counseling and Trauma Resource Clinic  
Madison  
The Wisconsin Breast Cancer Coalition  
Milwaukee  
Three Gaits, Inc.  
Stoughton  
Tikkun Ha-Ir  
Milwaukee  
UPbrella  
Milwaukee  
Urban Affairs Association  
Milwaukee  
Urban Economic Development Association of Wisconsin (UEDA)  
Milwaukee  
Veterans Employment Alliance, Inc.  
Greenfield  
Vista Global Coaching & Consulting  
Madison  
VLCF  
Volunteer Center of Ozaukee County  
Grafton  
WasteCap Resource Solutions  
Milwaukee  
Waukesha Civic Theatre  
Waukesha  
Ways to Work, Inc.  
Milwaukee  
Wisconsin Association of Family and Children’s Agencies  
Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers, Inc.  
Madison  
Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired  
Madison  
Wisconsin Democracy Campaign  
Wisconsin EMS Association  
Wind Lake  
Wisconsin Lutheran High School  
Milwaukee  
Wisconsin Nonprofits Association  
Wisconsin Partnership for Housing Development  
Madison  
Wisconsin Scholastic Chess Federation  
Milwaukee  
Wisconsin Transit Riders Alliance  
Milwaukee  
YWCA - Greater Green Bay  
Green Bay  
YWCA Madison  
Madison  
YWCA Southeast Wisconsin  
Milwaukee

**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
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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
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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