Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship
UPDATED September 5, 2017

The Honorable Alex X. Mooney
1232 Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Mooney:

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,

West Virginia

Augusta Levy Learning Center
Aurora Lights
Beckley Area Foundation, Inc.
Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Tri-State
Big Creek People in Action
Burlington United Methodist Family Services
CAMC Foundation
Catholic Charities West Virginia
Charles Town Now
Child and Youth Advocacy Center
Church Without Walls Ministries, Inc.
Collective Impact, LLC
Community Networks, Inc.
Covenant House
Dana & Ethel Ervin Scholarship Fund
Facing Hunger Food Bank
Family Refuge Center, Lewisburg, WV
Friends of the Cheat, Inc.
Friends of the Lewis House, Inc.
Fuller Center for Housing of Beckley, Inc.
Future of Nursing West Virginia
Global Outreach Foundation
Good Samaritan Free Clinic
Greenbrier County Committee on Aging
Greenbrier Valley Theatre
Habitat for Humanity of Kanawha and Putnam HomeOwnership Center, Inc.
Huntington WV Area Habitat for Humanity

Morgantown
Beckley
Huntington
Burlington
Charleston
Wheeling
Charles Town
Lewisburg
Martinsburg
Charleston
Miami
Huntington
Lewisburg
Kingwood
Oak Hill
Beckley
Charleston
Charles Town
Martinsburg
Lewisburg
Lewisburg
Charleston
Elkins
Huntington

In Touch and Concerned, Inc.
Jackson County Developmental Center
Junior League of Wheeling
Just For Kids Child Advocacy Center
King's Daughters Child Care Center
League of Women Voters of Thurston County
Markley Memorial Chapel
Martinsburg ReNew
Member KVVP
Midwives Alliance of WV
Mission West Virginia, Inc.
MiTec
Mountain Hospice, Inc.
New River Gorge Learning Co-op
Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
Ohio Valley Recovery, Inc.
Philanthropy West Virginia
Piney Creek Watershed Association
Pocahontas County Family Resource Network
Potomac Highlands Fuller Center
Preston Community Arts Center
Preston County Parks and Recreation Commission
Raising Clarity
Ruckman Heritage Scholarship Foundation
Spark! Imagination and Science Center
St. Agnes Catholic Church, Social Concerns Committee
St. John's / St. Vincent's Home, Inc.
Stone Strategies

Morgantown
Wheeling
Beckley
Wheeling
Olympia
Huttonsville
Martinsburg
Charleston
Hillsboro
Hurricane
Elkins
Belington
Fayetteville
Huntington
Wheeling
Beckley
Marlinton
Franklin
Kingwood
Berkeley Springs
Lewisburg
Morgantown
Harpers Ferry
Wheeling
Charleston
| TEAM for West Virginia Children, Inc.       | Huntington          |
| Terrell Ellis & Associates, Inc.            | Charleston          |
| The Grant Advantage                         | Lewisburg           |
| Trillium Performing Arts Collective         | Williamson          |
| Tug Valley Recovery Shelter                 | Lewisburg           |
| United Way of Greenbrier Valley             | Huntington          |
| United Way of Southern West Virginia, Inc.  | Beckley             |
| United Way of the River Cities              | Wheeling            |
| Unity Center Wheeling WV                   | Rupert              |
| Wellspring of Greenbrier, Inc.              | Milwaukee           |
| West Allis Players Community Theater       | Huntington          |
| West Virginia Nonprofit Association         |                    |
| West Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council | Huntington |
| Wheeling Health Right, Inc.                | Charleston          |
| WV FREE                                    |                    |
| WV Professional Dance Company               | Beckley             |

### 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
Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship

West Virginia

Updated September 5, 2017

Page 4

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