The Honorable Niki Tsongas  
1714 Longworth House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  

Dear Representative Tsongas:

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,

Massachusetts

A Direct Solution  Marstons Mills
African Community Education Program  Worcester
Agassiz Baldwin Community Center  Cambridge
American Bladder Cancer Society  Dalton
American Lung Association - Massachusetts  Springfield
Anne Butterfield Company  Lawrence
Asperger Works, Inc.  Boston
Associated Grant Makers  Boston
Authentic Caribbean Foundation Inc.  Boston
Barr Foundation  Boston
Bay Cove Human Services  Boston
Bay Path University  Bedford
Bedford Youth & Family Services  Bedford
Berkshire AHEC  Framingham
Berkshire County Arc  Boston
Bethany Hill Place, Inc.  Boston
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Mass / Metrowest  Boston
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay  Boston
Big Sister Association of Greater Boston  Boston
BioBuilder Educational Foundation  Newton
Boston Building Materials Co-op Charitable and Educational Fund  Roxbury
Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center  Boston
Boston Education, Skills and Training Corp.  Medford
Boston Harbor Now  Boston
Boston Partners in Education  Boston
Bostonian  Jamaica Plain
Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston  Boston
Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston, Jordan Clubhouse  Boston
Broad Cove Chorale / Unicorn Singers  Chelsea

Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board  Brockton
Cambridge Historical Society  Cambridge
Cape Abilities  Hyannis
Cape Cod Child Development Center for Social Policy  North Quincy
Center for Teen Empowerment, Inc.  Boston
Cerebral Palsy of Massachusetts, Inc.  Stoughton
Chatham Marconi Maritime Center  New Chatham
Child & Family Services  Hyannis
Children Across America  Milford
Children's Friend, Inc.  Worcester
Children's Melanoma Prevention Foundation  Norwell
Citizen Schools  Boston
City Mission  Boston
CLASS, Inc.  Canton
Coalition for Responsible Home Education  Boston
College Light Opera Company  Nantucket
Communities for People  New Bedford
Community Foundation for Nantucket  New Bedford
Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts  New Bedford
Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts  New Bedford
Community Health Center of Cape Cod  Cape Cod
Community Servings  Jamaica Plain
Congregation Beth Israel of the Merrimack Valley  North Andover
Convergence Ensemble  Boston
Cotuit Center for the Arts  Cotuit
Disability Rights Advocacy Fund  Boston
Domus Incorporated  Westfield
Dream Day on Cape Cod  Brewster
Edward Street Child Services  Worcester
Energy Consumers Alliance of New England, Inc.  Boston
<p>| Environmental League of Massachusetts | LifePath, Inc. | Greenfield |
| ESC of New England | Boston | Little Brothers - Friends of the Elderly | Boston |
| Fairwinds - Nantucket's Counseling Center | Nantucket | Lovelane Special Needs Horseback Riding Program | Lincoln |
| Fidelity House Human Services | Lawrence | Lowell Telecommunications Corp. | Lowell |
| Flint Neighborhood Association | Fall River | Lower Cape Communications | Provincetown |
| Flying Cloud Institute | Great Barrington | Lutherans Restoring Creation MAMH | Braintree |
| For Kids Only Afterschool | Salem | Mass Audubon | Boston |
| Franklin County Community Development Corporation | Greenfield | Mass Audubon's Long Pasture Wildlife Sanctuary | Barnstable |
| Friends of the Public Garden | Boston | Massachusetts Advocates for Children | Boston |
| FSG | Boston | Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions | Belmont |
| Generation Teach, Inc. | Boston | Massachusetts Nonprofit Network | Boston |
| GMA Foundations | Worcester | MassEquality Education Fund | Medway |
| Greater Worcester Community Foundation | Lee | Medway Community Farm, Inc. | Medway |
| Growth River, LLC | West Newton | Melissa Gilroy, CPA | Boston |
| Hawkeye Campership Fund, Inc. | | MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership Merck Family Fund | Boston |
| Health Care Without Walls | Wellesley | Metropolitan Waterworks Museum | Chestnut Hill |
| Health Resources in Action | Boston | MetroWest Nonprofit Network | Framingham |
| Helping Hands: Monkey Helpers for the Disabled | Brimfield | MetroWest Visitors Bureau | Framingham |
| Hitchcock Free Academy | Nantucket | NAMI Cape Cod | Hyannis |
| Housing Nantucket (Affordable Housing Non-Profit) | | Nantucket Interfaith Council | Nantucket |
| Interim Executive Solutions | Arlington | Neighborhood Falmouth, Inc. | Falmouth |
| Inward Bound Mindfulness Education | | Neponset River Watershed Association | Canton |
| Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action | Boston | New Communities Services, Inc. | Cambridge |
| Jewish Family &amp; Child Services | Waltham | New England Museum Association | Arlington |
| John E Boyd Center for Child Care &amp; Development | Springfield | Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires | Great Barrington |
| Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts | Boston | Nonprofit VOTE | Cambridge |
| Junior League of Boston | Brookline | North Shore Alliance of LGBTQ Youth | Salem |
| K. Weill Consulting Group, LLC | | North Shore CDC | Salem |
| Kathy Eckles &amp; Co., LLC | Gloucester | Northern Berkshire Habitat for Humanity | North Adams |
| Keganin No Senshi Aikido Nonprofit, Inc. | Holyoke | Northfield Council on Aging | Northfield |
| Kenneth Mason Waugh Nonprofit, Inc. | | Nurtury, Inc. | Boston |
| L'Arche Boston North | Haverhill | OLLIE | Manchester |
| Lawrence CommunityWorks, Inc. | Lawrence | | |</p>
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**National Organizations**

- Abila
- Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education, Inc.
- AdoptAClassroom.org
- African Diaspora United, Inc.
- 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
Celiac Disease Foundation
Center for Health, Environment & Justice
Center for Inquiry
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
Citizen Schools
CleanSlateNow
Common Cause
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
Millennium Water Alliance
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 for 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 Soldiers and Sailors of America
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