The Honorable Stephen Lynch  
2268 Rayburn House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lynch:

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 Cambridge
American Bladder Cancer Society Dalton
American Lung Association - Springfield
Massachusetts
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
Bethany Hill Place, Inc.
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 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 Chelsea
Broad Cove Chorale / Unicorn Singers

Brockton Area Workforce Brockton
Investment Board
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 North 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
College Light Opera Company Boston
Communities for People Nantucket
Community Foundation for Nantucket
Southeastern Massachusetts
Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts New Bedford
Community Health Center of Cape Cod
Community Servings Jamaica Plain
Congregation Beth Israel of North Andover
the Merrimack Valley
Convergence Ensemble Boston
Cotuit Center for the Arts Cotuit
Disability Rights Advocacy Boston
Fund
Domus Incorporated Westfield
Dream Day on Cape Cod Brewster
Edward Street Child Services Worcester
Energy Consumers Alliance of Boston
New England, Inc.
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Our Neighbors' Table                Amesbury
Outer Voices                        Needham
Parent Talk                         Needham
Paul & Phyllis Fireman Charitable Foundation Boston
Paul Katz Consulting                Boston
Pilgrims First Landing Park         Provincetown
Pine Street Inn                     Boston
Pleasant Bay Community Boating      Boston
Proposals, Etc.                     Medway
Providers' Council                  Boston
Puppet Showplace Theater            Haverhill
Rebuilding Together Greater Haverhill, Inc. Haverhill
Reflection Films                    Arlington
Resources of Human Development      Lynn
Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy   Boston
Roxbury Youthworks, Inc.            Roxbury
Samaritans                          Boston
Sandwich Food Pantry, Inc.          Sandwich
Scleroderma Foundation New England  Topsfield
Self-Reliance                        North Falmouth
Shelter Music Boston                Boston
Silver Lining Mentoring             Boston
SJ Associates                       Randolph
Soccer Without Borders               Arlington
Step Up International                Brookline
Summer Ink                          Salem
Susan F Schiro and Peter J Manus Foundation Yarmouthport
Susan St. Pierre Consulting Services Florence
Tapestry Health                     Cambridge
The Cape Cod Foundation             Harvard
The Center for Effective Philanthropy Lowell
The Green Streets Initiative        Peabody
The Open Pantry of Greater Lowell   Fall River
The Progeria Research Foundation    Sudbury
The Second Half Lifelong Learning Institute, Inc. Boston
The Sudbury Foundation              Turners Falls
The Trustees of Reservations        Boston
The United Arc, Inc.                Boston

Massachusetts
Third Sector New England            Boston
This Star Won't Go Out               Quincy
Volunteers in Medicine              Cambridge
Berkshires, Inc.                    Great Barrington
Wayside Youth & Family Support Network Framingham
WE CAN                              Harwich Port
Western Massachusetts Training Consortium Holyoke
Winchester After School Programs d/b/a Kids' Corner Winchester
WORK, Inc.                          Dorchester
World Ocean School                  Boston
WorldBoston                         Boston
YW Boston                           Boston
YWCA Southeastern                   New Bedford
Massachusetts

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
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Massachusetts

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
Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship

Massachusetts

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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