

# Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship

April 5, 2017

The Honorable Bonnie Watson Coleman  
1535 Longworth House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Watson Coleman:

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.

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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,

### New Jersey Organizations

A. L. Ball CPA	Somerset	Community Outreach Services, Inc.	Paterson
Above The Rim, Inc. of Newark	Newark	Community Planning & Advocacy Council	
Advance Housing, Inc.	Teterboro	Concerned Persons for Adoption Summit	
Agraj Seva Kendra	Monroe Township	COPE	
Algonquin Arts Theatre		Council of New Jersey Grantmakers	Trenton
American Association of Teachers of German	Cherry Hill	CPFANJ	Garwood
Anaththoh Foundation		Creative Capacity	
Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey		Creative Communications	Edison
Art House Productions	Jersey City	Creative New Jersey	
ArtZwag		CUMAC	Paterson
Associate Alumnae of Douglass College	New Brunswick	D.G. McDermott Associates, LLC	Red Bank
Bayshore Family of Companies	Keasbey	Delaware Valley Americans United for Separation of Church and State	Clayton
BazanED		Dress for Success Morris County	
Bergen Volunteer Medical Initiative (BVMI)	Hackensack	Edison Greenways Group, Inc.	Edison
Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County	Lawrenceville	Educational Arts Team	Jersey City
Camden Area Health Education Center	Camden	Fabian Consulting, Inc.	Hightstown
Capacity Building and Policy Experts	Pennington	Family and Children's Services	
Carolyn Dorfman Dance	Union	Family Resource Associates, Inc.	
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton	Trenton	Financial Wellness Institute	Deptford
Center for Non-Profits		First Congregational Church of Montclair	
Center for Regenerative Community Solutions	Basking Ridge	Foster and Adoptive Family Services	
Central Jersey Family Health Consortium	North Brunswick	FRA	
Chen Dance Company	Englewood Cliffs	Freedom Center for Wildlife Inc.	Cinnaminson
Children's Specialized Hospital Foundation		Fylstra & Associates, LLC	Allendale
Christ Episcopal Church	Island Heights	Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation	Morristown
Christ the King Preparatory School	Glen Ridge	GlassRoots	Newark
Clear, Effective Communications	Jersey City	GreggSmith.com, Inc.	Princeton
		Gubarry Inc.	South Orange
		Heightened Independence & Progress (hip)	Hackensack
		Histiocytosis Association	Pitman
		HiTOPS, Inc.	Princeton
		hob'art co-operative gallery	Hoboken
		Holiday Express	Tinton Falls
		Home Care Options	Paterson
		HomeFront	Lawrenceville

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**New Jersey**

Homeless Solutions, Inc.	Morristown	New Jersey Future	Trenton
Hope Community Outreach	Camden	New Jersey Policy Perspective	Morristown
Hudson County Housing Resource Center	Jersey City	New Jersey Public Health Association	Piscataway
Hudson River Apiary Society	North Bergen	New Jersey SHARES, Inc.	Ewing
Hyacinth AIDS Foundation	New Brunswick	New Jersey State Museum Foundation	Trenton
Interfaith Hospitality Network - Essex	Montclair	New Jersey Theatre Alliance	West Orange
Ironbound Community Corporation	Newark	New Jersey Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster	New Jersey
JCDTOC, Inc.		New Jersey Youth Development Foundation	Kenilworth
Jersey Battered Women's Service	Morristown	New York-New Jersey Trail Conference	Mahwah
Jewish Community Relations Council of Southern New Jersey	Cherry Hill	Newark LGBTQ Community Center	Newark
Kessler Foundation	East Hanover	NJ Coalition to End Domestic Violence	Trenton
Kids Corporation II	Newark	NJ State Association of Jewish Federations	Scotch Plains
Literacy Volunteers of America - Monmouth County	Long Branch	NOFA-NJ	
Love of Jesus Food Pantry	Paterson	NORWESCAP	Phillipsburg
Lumad Journey Healing Ministries, LLC	Red Bank	Ocean's Harbor House	Toms River
Magical Healing	Wayne	oneCommunityConnect	Irvington
Manufactured Home Owners Association of New Jersey, Inc.	New Jersey	'Ōpio Haku Mo'olelo Outpost in the Burbs, Inc.	Branchburg
Marcia Smith Fleres LLC	Plainsboro	Paradise Consulting	Montclair
Marie Adelaide Center/ Adelaide's Place	Atlantic City	Partners for Health Foundation	Cranford
Maushumi Nerurkar	Belle Mead	Partners for Women and Justice	Montclair
MGR Counseling, LLC	Camden	Pascale Sykes Foundation, Inc.	
Mi Casita Day Care Center, Inc.	Camden	Paterson Alliance	Paterson
Monmouth Conservation Foundation	Middletown	Paterson Education Fund	Paterson
Morris Arts	Morristown	Paterson Task Force for Community Action, Inc.	Paterson
Morris County Historical Society	Morris Plains	Peg Wright	Somerset
Morris Park Alliance		Perth Amboy Artworks, Inc.	Perth Amboy
Mosaic Dance Theater Company	Glen Ridge	Planned Lifetime Assistance Network of New Jersey	Somerville
Music/Art of NJ, Inc.	Paterson	Praise Consulting	
My Eternal Family	Mount Laurel	Prime for Results International	
NAMI Camden County		Princeton AlumniCorps	Princeton, Jersey City, Camden
New Eyes for the Needy	Short Hills	Pro Arts Jersey City	Jersey City
New Jersey Association of Community Providers		Puerto Rican Unity for Progress	Camden
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.	Mercerville	Pushcart Players	Verona
New Jersey Association on Correction	Trenton	Ray Mueller Productions	Stanhope
New Jersey Community Capital	New Brunswick	Rescue Hands United International, Inc.	Elizabeth
		Resource Education Awareness by Latinos in Teaneck	New Jersey

Rock Brook School Skillman  
 Rutgers Institute for Ethical Newark  
 Leadership  
 Rutgers TEEM Gateway Camden  
 Sammy's Hope, Inc. Sayreville  
 Scamera Consulting Services Bloomfield  
 Seashore Family Services of NJ Brick  
 Society For Preservation of Oakhurst  
 Continued Homeownership  
 Society In The Ekos, Inc. Boonton  
 Sojihuggles Children's Newton  
 Foundation  
 St. Paul's Community Paterson  
 Development Corporation  
 St. Peter's Haven Clifton  
 Statewide Parent Advocacy  
 Network, Inc.  
 Sustainable West Milford Hewitt  
 Tabernacle of Faith Church  
 Team Management 2000, Inc. Hackensack  
 Tewksbury Land Trust Morristown  
 The Affum-Darkwah Mission Orange  
 International, Inc. (TADMI)  
 The Anxiety & Depression Totowa  
 Initiative, Inc.  
 The Arc Foundation of Somerset Fat Hills  
 County  
 The Arc of New Jersey North  
 Brunswick  
 The Atlantic Foundation Hamilton  
 The Community YMCA Shrewsbury  
 The Enrichment Center for New Jersey  
 Women, Children & Families,  
 Inc.  
 The Fund for New Jersey  
 The Growing Stage - The Netcong  
 Children's of New Jersey  
 The New School for Music Study Kingston  
 The Women's Center Linwood  
 Trenton Area Soup Kitchen Trenton  
 Triple C Housing, Inc. Monmouth  
 Junction  
 Unitarian Universalist Legislative Summit  
 Ministry of NJ  
 United Way of Central Jersey Milltown  
 University-NOW Day Nursery Princeton  
 Victoria Foundation Newark  
 Vintage Automobile Museum Of Forked River  
 NJ  
 Virtua  
 Visual Arts Center of New Jersey Summit

Volunteers of America Delaware Collingswood  
 Valley  
 WHYSaveALife Foundation  
 Women Aware, Inc. New  
 Brunswick  
 Woodlands Wildlife Refuge North

**National Organizations**

Abila  
 Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic  
 Education, Inc.  
 AdoptAClassroom.org  
 Alliance for Strong Families and Communities  
 Alfred P. Sloan Foundation  
 American Alliance of Museums  
 American Association of Anatomists  
 American Association of Physics Teachers  
 American Association of Teachers of German  
 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  
 Annie E. Casey Foundation  
 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  
Ecology Project International  
Engineering Conferences International  
Feed the Children  
Feeding America  
Food & Water Watch  
Ford Foundation  
Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers  
Free Press  
Girl Scouts of the USA  
Girls Inc.  
Global Integrity  
Goodwill Industries, International  
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 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 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  
NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Center for Appropriate Technology  
National Center for Fire and Life Safety  
National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy  
National Council of Behavioral Health  
National Council of Churches  
National Council of Nonprofits  
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

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New Jersey

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 Commonwealth Fund  
The Dibble Institute  
The Educational Foundation of America  
The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi  
The Michael J. Fox Foundation  
The Ocean Foundation  
The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation  
The Voter Participation Center  
TIDES  
Unemployment Services Trust  
Union for Reform Judaism  
United Way Worldwide  
University Professional & Continuing  
Education Association  
US Lacrosse  
Vasculitis Foundation  
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