Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship
UPDATED June 1, 2018

The Honorable Louise Slaughter
2469 Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Slaughter:

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,

New York

4 Real Women International, Inc. New York
4heads, Inc. Brooklyn
826NYC, Inc. Brooklyn
Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives New York
Acacia Network
Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education, Inc. New York
Adirondack Foundation Lake Placid
Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts Blue Mountain Lake
Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation New York
Advocates for Justice New York
African Diaspora Film Festival, Inc. New York
Aging in New York Fund, Inc. New York
Agricultural Stewardship Association Greenwich
ALGA New York
Alfred P. Sloan Foundation New York
All For One New York
All People’s Garden, Inc. New York
Alliance Of Resident Theatres/New York New York
American Baptist Churches Rochester Genesee Region Rochester
American Brass Chamber Music Association New York
Ancramdale Neighbors Helping Neighbors Association, Inc. Ancramdale
Angels Unaware, Inc. Bronx
Annabella Gonzalez Dance Theater, Inc. New York
Anti-Defamation League New York
Art School of Columbia County Ghent
Arts Council for Wyoming County Perry
Arts Council of Rockland Arts on the Lake
Arts Services Initiative of Western New York, Inc. Bronx
Artsmith, Inc. Binghamton
Asian American Arts Alliance for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc. New York
Association of Art Museum Directors New York
Association of Research and Enlightenment of New York, Inc. New York
Association of Teaching Artists Fairport
Astoria Performing Arts Center New York
Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice Webster
AutismUp New York
Avodah: The Jewish Service Corps New York
B. Robert Williamson Jr. Foundation New York
Ballet Tech Foundation, Inc. New York
BeaconArts Hyde Park
Beatrix Farrand Garden Association Big Reuse
Big Reuse
Bond Street Theatre New York
Braata Productions
Bronx Arts Ensemble Bronx
Bronx Children's Museum Bronxville
Bronxville Women's Club Brooklyn
Brooklyn Academy of Music Brooklyn
Brooklyn Arts Council Brooklyn
Brooklyn Bar Association Brooklyn
Brooklyn Community Pride Center
Brooklyn Heights Association
Brooklyn Youth Sports Club Brooklyn
Buddhist Global Relief
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## Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship

**Updated June 1, 2018**

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| Junior League of Rochester | | Manhattan Land Trust | New York |
| Kasey's Key, Inc. | Buffalo, New York | Margherit Community Corporation | Far Rockaway, New York |
| Katonah Museum of Art | Katonah, New York | Marketing EDGE | New York |
| Kavelman Group Philanthropic Advisors | New York | Massachusetts Avenue Project | Buffalo, New York |
| Keoni Movement Arts | New York | Maxe School of Public and International Affairs, Baruch College | Long Island City, New York |
| Kinesis Project Dance Theatre | Ithaca, New York | Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals | New York |
| Kiwi Partners, Inc. | New York | Maysles Documentary Center | New York |
| Lar Lubovitch Dance Company | New York | Mechanicville Area Community Services Center (MACSC) | Mechanicville, New York |
| Lar Lubovitch Dance Foundation | New York | Mediation Center of Dutchess County | Poughkeepsie, New York |
| L'Arche Syracuse, Inc. | Syracuse, New York | MERCAZ USA | New York |
| Lawyers For Children | New York | Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty | New York |
| League of American Orchestras | East Syracuse, New York | MFY Legal Services, Inc. | New York |
| Learning Disabilities Association of CNY | | | |
| Let's Get Ready | New York | | |
| Leviticus 25:23 Alternative Fund, Inc. | Tarrytown, New York | | |
| Life Listening Resource: Coffee Connection | Rochester, New York | Migraine Research Foundation | |
| LifeWay Network | Rego Park, New York | Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts | Little Falls, New York |
| Literacy Connections | Poughkeepsie, New York | Museum Association of New York | Huntington, New York |
| Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County | | Music Conservatory of Westchester | White Plains, New York |
| LiteracyCNY | Syracuse, New York | National Association for Shoplifting Prevention | Melville, New York |
| Livingston Arts Center | New York City | National Bottle Museum | Ballston Spa, New York |
| Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation | | National Guild for Community Arts Education | New York |
| Local Learning: The National Network for Folk Arts in Education | | National School Climate Center | Rochester, New York |
| Long Island Center for Independent Living, Inc. (LICIL) | | New Destiny Housing Corporation | New York City, New York |</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