

# Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship

UPDATED January 26, 2018

The Honorable Steve Russell  
128 Cannon House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Russell,

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,

<b>Oklahoma</b>			
108   Contemporary	Tulsa	Council on American - Islamic Relations, Oklahoma Chapter	Oklahoma City
4RKids	Enid	Creative Supports Ranch	Marland
A Chance to Change	Oklahoma City	Crossroads Clubhouse	Tulsa
Abba's Family	Tahlequah	Crossroads Hospice Charitable Foundation	Tulsa
Ada Arts and Heritage Trust Authority	Ada	Crosstown Learning Center, Inc.	Tulsa
Ada Homeless Services	Ada	Daily Living Centers of Oklahoma	Bethany
Aim High Academy		D-DENT, Inc.	Oklahoma City
Among Friends Activity Center	Norman	Easter Seals Oklahoma	Oklahoma City
Anna's House Foundation		Edmond Historical Society & Museum	Edmond
Ardmore Habitat for Humanity, Inc.	Ardmore	Edmond Mobile Meals	
Areawide Aging Agency, Inc.	Oklahoma City	Educational Alternatives	Norman
Arnall Family Foundation	Oklahoma City	Executive Service Corps of Central Oklahoma	Oklahoma City
Avedis Foundation	Shawnee	Fairland Farmers Market	Fairland
Best Friends of Pets	Oklahoma City	Family Builders, Inc.	Oklahoma City
Bethany Improvement Foundation	Bethany	Family Safety Center Tulsa	Tulsa
Bethesda		Five Civilized Tribes Museum	Muskogee
Big Brothers Big Sisters		Food and Shelter	Norman
Board of Directors of KIPR	Norman	Forster Consulting LLC	Oklahoma City
Boys & Girls Club of Durant	Durant	Gatesway Foundation, Inc.	Broken Arrow
Bridges of Norman	Norman	Gateway to Prevention & Recovery	Shawnee
Brighter Outlook		Girls on the Run of Central Oklahoma	Oklahoma City
Broken Arrow Community Playhouse	Broken Arrow	Goodwill Industries of Central Oklahoma	Oklahoma City
Buffalo Grass Arts Institute	Clinton	Goodwill Industries of Tulsa	
Camp Fire Green Country	Tulsa	Great Plains Region of AMBUCS	
CAP Tulsa	Tulsa	Har-Ber Village on Grand Lake O' The Cherokees	Grove
Cargo Ranch		Health Alliance for the Uninsured	Oklahoma City
CASA of Cherokee Country	Tahlequah	Heartline, Inc.	
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City	Oklahoma City	Hearts for Hearing	Oklahoma City
Cherokee National Historical Society, Inc.	Tahlequah	Hope Chest OKC	
Children's Hospital Foundation	Oklahoma City	HSI Sensing	Chickasha
Christians Concerned and Duncan Area Literacy Council	Duncan	Impact	Edmond
Cities In Schools, Inc.	Ardmore	Impact Oklahoma	Oklahoma City
Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma	Tulsa	INCA Community Services, Inc.	Tishomingo
Community Health Foundation of Ponca City	Ponca City	Independent Transportation Network of Central Oklahoma	Oklahoma City

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Indian Health Care Resource Center		OKC Metro Alliance, Inc.	Oklahoma City
Infant Crisis Services, Inc.	Oklahoma City	OKC Police Athletic League	Oklahoma City
ITN Central Oklahoma		Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts	Oklahoma City
Jasmine Moran Children's Museum	Seminole	Oklahoma Blood Institute	
Jim Riley Outreach		Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits	Oklahoma City
Junior League of Norman	Norman	Oklahoma Children's Theatre	Oklahoma City
JustHope	Tulsa	Oklahoma City Beautiful	Oklahoma City
Kay Ray CPA		Oklahoma City Metro Literacy Coalition	Oklahoma City
Kelly B. Todd Cerebral Palsy & Neuro-Muscular Foundation, Inc.	Muskogee	Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum	Oklahoma City
Kirkpatrick Family Fund	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma City Repertory Theatre	Oklahoma City
Lawton Philharmonic Orchestra	Lawton	Oklahoma City University Graduate Program in Nonprofit Leadership	Oklahoma City
Leap O' Faith Therapeutic Riding Center	Ada	Oklahoma City Zoo	
Legacy International	Yukon	Oklahoma Guardian Ad Litem Institute	Oklahoma City
Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc.	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma Hall of Fame	Oklahoma City
Lighthouse Properties LLC	Tulsa	Oklahoma Heart Gallery	Tulsa
Limbs for Life Foundation	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy	Oklahoma City
Little Light House	Tulsa	Oklahoma Museums Association	Oklahoma City
Lowe Family Young Scholars Program	Bartlesville	Oklahoma Performing Arts, Inc.	Tulsa
Luna Sol Consulting	Tulsa	Oklahoma Policy Institute	Tulsa
Lyric Theater of Oklahoma	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma Railway Museum	Oklahoma City
Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art	Shawnee	Oklahoma Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice	Tulsa
Marlow Samaritans	Marlow	Oklahoma Women's Coalition	Oklahoma City
McLaughlin Family Foundation	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma Zoological Society	
Meals on Wheels of Metro Tulsa	Tulsa	Oklahomans for the Arts	Oklahoma City
Medical Equipment Assistance Program, Inc.		Okmulgee County Homeless Shelter	Okmulgee
Mental Health Association Oklahoma		Operation Aware of Oklahoma	Tulsa
MetaFund	Oklahoma City	Operation C.A.R.E Ministries	Altus
Metropolitan	Oklahoma City	Opportunities Industrialization Center of Oklahoma County (OIC)	Oklahoma City
Misfits, Mutts and Meows		Opry Heritage Foundation of OK	Oklahoma City
Moore Youth and Family Services	Moore	Osage County Historical Society/Museum	
National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum	Oklahoma City	Other Options, Inc.	
NBC Oklahoma	Altus	Outreach Education Initiative	Tulsa
Neighborhood Alliance	Oklahoma City	PAGES OKC	Oklahoma City
New Hope Oklahoma, Inc.	Tulsa	Panhandle Services for Children, Inc.	Guymon
NewView Oklahoma	Oklahoma City	Parents Helping Parents	
Non-Profit Health Organization	Enid	Paseo Arts Association	Oklahoma City
NorthCare	Oklahoma City	Pathways Adult Learning Center	Tulsa
Nth Gift LLC	Tulsa		
OASIS Adult Day Services	Tulsa		
OK Mozart, Inc.	Bartlesville		
OKC Dream Center	Oklahoma City		

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Payne Education Center	Oklahoma City	The Children's Hospital	
Peaceful Family Solutions	Oklahoma City	VOLUNTEERS, Inc.	Oklahoma City
Perinatal Quality Foundation	Oklahoma City	The Eden Clinic, Inc.	Norman
Philbrook Museum of Art	Tulsa	The First Tee of Tulsa	Tulsa
Phillips Theological Seminary	Tulsa	The Foundation for Oklahoma	
Pollard Theatre Company	Guthrie	City Public Schools	Oklahoma City
Ponca City Arts and Humanities	Ponca City	The Global Foundation for	
Pontotoc Animal Welfare Society	Ada	Peroxisomal Disorders	Tulsa
Positive Tomorrows	Oklahoma City	The Homeless Alliance	Oklahoma City
Poteau Valley Humane Society	Poteau	The How-To Palace	Altus
Potts Family Foundation	Norman	The Islamic Council of	
Pride In McAlester	McAlester	Oklahoma	
Project Hope Worldwide		The Little Light House, Inc.	Tulsa
Promoting Animal Welfare		The Oklahoma Academy for	
Society, Inc.	Muskogee	State Goals	
Purple Ink		The Oklahoma Institute for Child	
RAIN Oklahoma	Oklahoma City	Advocacy	Oklahoma City
Rebuilding Together OKC	Oklahoma City	The Oklahoma United Methodist	
Regional Food Bank of		Circle of Care	Oklahoma City
Oklahoma	Oklahoma City	The Pencil Box	Tulsa
ReMerge	Oklahoma City	The Propel Foundation	
Resonator	Norman	Incorporated	Oklahoma City
Restore Hope Ministries	Tulsa	The Recovery Center	Oklahoma City
Retired Senior Volunteer		Tiny Paws Kitten Rescue	Stillwater
Program of Tulsa, Inc.	Tulsa	To By For Kids Foundation	Oklahoma City
Route 66 Alliance	Tulsa	Tri-City Youth & Family Center,	
RSVP of Central Oklahoma	Oklahoma City	Inc.	Choctaw
RSVP Tulsa, Inc.		TSHA - Total Source for Hearing-	
Sand Springs Community		loss and Access	Tulsa
Services	Sand Springs	Tulsa Area United Way	Tulsa
Sand Springs Education		Tulsa Botanic Garden	Tulsa
Foundation	Sand Springs	Tulsa Camerata	Tulsa
Second Chance And Reentry		Tulsa Campaign to Prevent Teen	
Services	EL Reno	Pregnancy	Tulsa
Senior Citizens of Shawnee, Inc.	Shawnee	Tulsa Fire Museum, Inc.	Tulsa
Sharpshooter Communications,		Tulsa Girls Art School	
LLC	Tulsa	Tulsa Modern Movement	Tulsa
Shortgrass Arts and Humanities		Tulsa Opera, Inc.	Tulsa
Council		Tulsa Symphony Orchestra	Tulsa
SixTwelve	Oklahoma City	United Way of Central Oklahoma	Edmond
Skyline Urban Ministry	Oklahoma City	Up With Trees	Tulsa
Smart Growth Tulsa	Tulsa	Upward Transitions, Inc.	Oklahoma City
Smart Start Central Oklahoma	Oklahoma City	Volunteers of America	
Special Care	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma, Inc.	Tulsa
Special Olympics Oklahoma	Tulsa	Wagoner Literacy Group	
Stillwater CARES	Stillwater	Warriors for Freedom	
Surayya Anne Foundation OKC	Oklahoma City	Foundation	Oklahoma City
TARC	Tulsa	Westview Boys' Home	Hollis
Teen Recovery Solutions	Oklahoma City	Wings A Special Needs	
The Anna's House Foundation		Community	Oklahoma City
The Boys & Girls Clubs of		Women Lead Oklahoma	Oklahoma City
Oklahoma County	Oklahoma City		

Woodward Arts & Theatre  
Council, Inc. Woodward  
World Neighbors, Inc. Oklahoma City  
Young Nonprofit Professionals  
Network of Oklahoma City Oklahoma City

### 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  
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  
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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  
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 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