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Public Agenda

**The Honorable
John W. Gardner (1912-2002)**
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May 25, 2006

To: Senate Majority Leader William Frist
Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid
The Honorable Charles Grassley
The Honorable Max Baucus
The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch
The Honorable John D. Rockefeller
The Honorable Trent Lott
The Honorable Kent Conrad
The Honorable Olympia E. Snowe
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House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable William M. Thomas
The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
The Honorable Dave Camp

We, the undersigned organizations, representing a broad cross-section of charitable organizations and millions of volunteers and donors, are writing to express our strong support for enactment of a significant package of charitable giving tax incentives and charitable reforms similar to those included in the Senate's version of Tax Relief Act of 2005 (H.R. 4297).

The charitable giving tax incentives will help to spur increased charitable giving by all Americans at a time when the resources of charitable organizations are stretched thin by compelling community needs. These giving incentives are very similar to those that were passed with overwhelming bipartisan support as part of the CARE Act and the Charitable Giving Act in the 108th Congress.

The reforms, as amended by the staff of the Senate Finance Committee and Joint Committee on Taxation, will strengthen the work of our sector by deterring and punishing abuses by individuals who exploit charitable organizations for their personal gain. The amended reforms closely mirror the recommendations of the Panel on the Nonprofit Sector, a broad effort undertaken by the charitable community this past year to improve the transparency and accountability of charitable organizations.

While we support increased enforcement of current law, we firmly believe that these reforms are necessary to improve government oversight and prevent abuses by individuals, without imposing unnecessary costs or hardships on reputable charities. Moreover, the proposed reforms strike the right balance between legitimate government oversight and protecting the independence that charitable organizations need to remain innovative and effective.

We urge Congress to pass a significant package of charitable incentives and reforms that will provide important benefits to charitable organizations and support strong ethical conduct within the charitable community.

Sincerely,

AARP

Alliance for Advancing Nonprofit Health Care

Alliance for Children and Families

America's Second Harvest - The Nation's Food Bank Network

American Association of Museums

American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA)

American Cancer Society

American Foundation for the Blind

American Health Quality Association

The American Health Quality Foundation

American Heart Association

American Lung Association

amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research

The Arthritis Foundation

Association of Christian Schools International

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

The Arc of the United States

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America

California Association of Nonprofits

Camp Fire USA

City Connect Detroit

City Year

The Cleveland Foundation

Colorado Nonprofit Association

The Columbus Foundation

Communities in Schools, Inc.

The Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta

The Community Foundation of South Wood County

Council for Advancement and Support of Education

Donors Forum of Chicago

Executive Service Corps Affiliate Network

Families Moving Forward, Opening Doors to Brighter Futures – Minneapolis, Minnesota

Family Life Broadcasting System

Family Service & MHC of Oak Park & River Forest – Oak Park, Illinois

Georgia Center for Nonprofits

Girl Scouts of the USA

Greater Yellowstone Coalition

Greater Wayzata Community Foundation, an affiliate of The Minneapolis Foundation Greyhound

Pets of America

Habitat for Humanity International

Hawaii Community Foundation

Hempstead Boys & Girls Club, Inc.

Honored to Serve, Inc. – Conway, Arkansas
The Huntington’s Disease Society of America
Independent Sector
Irving Healthcare Foundation – Irving, Texas
The International Association of Jewish Vocational Services
The Kresge Foundation
Lancaster County Community Foundation
Land Trust Alliance
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Lutheran Services in America
Maine Association of Nonprofits
Manitou Islands Memorial Society – Empire, Michigan
March of Dimes
Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations
Michigan Nonprofit Association
Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
Montana Nonprofit Association
The National 4-H Council
The National Alopecia Areata Foundation
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Independent Schools
National Council of La Raza
National Council of Nonprofit Associations
The National Eczema Association
National Health Council
National Human Services Assembly
The National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National NeighborWorks® Association
National Network for Youth
N.C. Center *for* Nonprofits (North Carolina)
National Psoriasis Foundation
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York
The Nonprofit Roundtable of Greater Washington
OHI, Empowering Lives – Brewer, Maine
Oklahoma Christian University
Orchards Children’s Services, Strengthening the Community through Quality Services to Children
and Families – Southfield, Michigan
Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation
Palm Healthcare Foundation, Inc. – West Palm Beach, Florida
Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations
The Pittsburgh Foundation
Points of Light Foundation
Prevent Blindness America
Rainbows, Guiding Kids through Life’s Storms – Rolling Meadows, Illinois
Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra
The Rhode Island Foundation
The Salvation Army, United States

The San Francisco Foundation
The Scleroderma Foundation
Senior Citizens' Center Oak Park River Forest
Shaker Family Center
Sjögren's Syndrome Foundation
South Carolina Association of Nonprofit Organizations
The Spina Bifida Association
Tides Center
Tides Foundation
Tides Network
The Trust for Public Land
The Yoreinu Foundation
UJA-Federation of New York
United Cerebral Palsy
United Seamen's Service
United Way of America
Utah Nonprofits Association
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Volunteers of America of Colorado
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