*Please tailor this action alert for your organization*

[Subject]: ACTION ALERT: Federal Tax Bill Harms Nonprofit Nonpartisanship

Greetings,

I am writing to urge you to take action to protect charitable nonprofits like ours from a harmful provision in the tax bill before Congress that would open charitable organizations to demands for partisan endorsements and unleash the funneling of billions in tax-deductible dollars that will corrupt our sector and communities.

The two different tax reform bills passed by Congress contain multiple provisions that would harm the ability of charitable nonprofits to advance our missions. The most damaging is Section 5201 of the House-passed bill; it would radically change the longstanding, vital protection in law for nonpartisanship of charitable, religious, and philanthropic organizations, known as the Johnson Amendment. Section 5201 would allow political operatives to pressure those organizations to endorse or oppose candidates for public office, and powerful donors to exert even more pressure by giving or threatening to withhold charitable contributions to get the organizations to endorse or oppose candidates the donors prefer. The proposed change would also make political donations – for the first time ever – tax-deductible when funneled through charitable nonprofits, houses of worship, and foundations.

The Senate respected, but the House blatantly ignored, the widespread and resolute opposition to changing the law expressed by [religious denominations](http://bjconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Letter-from-faith-groups-opposing-politicization-of-houses-of-worship.pdf) and [faith leaders](file:///C:\Users\David%20Thompson\ShareFile\Shared%20Folders\Public%20Policy\FEDERAL%20-%20Tax%20Policy%20Issues\Tax%20Reform%202017\Conference\faith%20leaders), [law enforcement](https://www.givevoice.org/sites/default/files/NASCO%20Letter%20to%20Congressional%20Leaders%20re%20Johnson%20Amendment%208.23.2017.pdf) officials, [charitable nonprofits and foundations](https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/sites/default/files/articles/community-letter-in-support-of-nonpartisanship-5-12-update.pdf), and the vast [majority of the American public](http://independentsector.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/march2017-poll-johnsonamendment.pdf). As the National Council of Nonprofits has warned, “This shameful attempt to advance the self-interest of politicians for more money and control at the expense of independent civil society must be stricken from the tax bill that comes out of the conference committee.”

All people have a vested interest in preserving the independence and nonpartisanship of the charitable and philanthropic sectors. ***I urge you to immediately take one or more of these steps*** ***below.***

Thank you very much,

[Your Name]

**Action Steps**

**Step One**: Call your Representative and Senators and deliver this important message ([contact info here](https://washingtonnonprofits.org/public-policy/elected-officials/)):

“I’m a constituent and I’m calling in opposition to a very harmful provision in the tax bill that would weaken the Johnson Amendment and politicize charitable nonprofits, houses of worship, and foundations against our wishes. The harmful provision is Section 5201 of the House-passed tax bill that is now in a conference committee with the Senate. It is imperative that Senator/Representative [NAME] reach out to every member of the conference committee and tell them the Johnson Amendment language in the House bill must be stripped from the final bill. Thank you.”

**Step Two**: Forward this action alert within your network and encourage them to join you in speaking up to preserve the independence and nonpartisanship of the charitable, religious, and philanthropic sectors.

**Step Three**: Send tweets. [Find your Representative and Senators](https://washingtonnonprofits.org/public-policy/elected-officials/), then send direct messages to their Twitter handles. Make use of those 280 characters to let them know how politicizing charitable nonprofits would affect your organizations’ ability to serve the community. Include the period at the start to send directly to your elected officials. Here are some sample tweets:

.[Senator/Representative twitter handle] Tell the tax conferees to strip House Sec. 5201 #JohnsonAmendment language from the final #taxreform bill.

.[Senator/Representative twitter handle] Sec. 5201 of the House bill would be damaging to work of #nonprofits. Remove this language in the final #taxreform bill and protect the #JohnsonAmendment.

.[Senator/Representative twitter handle] Let #nonprofits and houses of worship focus on #CommunityNotCandidates. Strip House Sec. 5201 from the final #taxreform bill and keep #JohnsonAmendment in place.

**Step Four**: Write and send a letter to the editor or op-ed to your local newspaper. Examples of effective messages can be found by reading the [op-eds and letters to the editor](https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/nonprofit-nonpartisanship-op-eds-and-letters-the-editor) posted at [www.GiveVoice.org](https://www.givevoice.org/" \t "_blank). Be sure to include the names of your Representative and Senators and “the Johnson Amendment” in your message – elected officials will definitely see what you have to say because they all use search filters that alert them when their names appear in print.

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