DRAFT- Press Release Template

*Please customize this as needed to fit your organization’s voice, style, and procedures.*

**[Your Organization] to Cantwell, Murray, and [Representative’s last name]: Support Charitable Nonprofits by Opposing Anti-Johnson Amendment Rider**

[DATE AND CITY]- Today, [nonprofit organization] called on Senator Maria Cantwell, Senator Patty Murray, and Representative [Representative name] to support the charitable nonprofits serving [your community/region] by working to prevent a policy rider that weakens enforcement of the Johnson Amendment. The Johnson Amendment is a long-standing part of the federal tax code that keeps nonprofits, foundations, and houses of worship above the partisan political fray by requiring tax-exempt organizations to be nonpartisan. Unfortunately, certain leaders in Congress are working to undermine this vital protection, which will have significant consequences for organizations like [your organization] serving [your community].

“The Johnson Amendment matters to [your organization],” said [speaker]. “The Johnson Amendment keeps us focused on our mission, instead of partisan politics, and helps maintain the trust we’ve worked to build with our clients, donors, and other supporters in the community. Our organization strongly encourages Senator Cantwell, Senator Murray, and Representative [Name] to support us and our fellow tax-exempt organizations in our community by telling the Conference Committee to prevent a harmful and unrelated anti-Johnson Amendment policy from making it into the final version of the Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill.”

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

* [Protecting the Johnson Amendment and Nonprofit Nonpartisanship](https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/trends-policy-issues/protecting-nonprofit-nonpartisanship)
* [Washington State Community Letter in support of Nonpartisanship](https://www.givevoice.org/sites/default/files/letters/wa3-herrera-beutler-protect-nonprofit-nonpartisanship-UPDATE.pdf) signed by Washington Nonprofits, Philanthropy Northwest, and more than 250 organizations across Washington State
* National [Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship](https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/sites/default/files/articles/community-letter-in-support-of-nonpartisanship-5-12-update.pdf) signed by more than 5,800 organizations, from all 50 states, including Washington Nonprofits
* Letter opposing the change signed by more than [100 denominations and major religious organizations](http://bjconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Letter-from-faith-groups-opposing-politicization-of-houses-of-worship.pdf) (not a single denomination supports the proposal to politicize houses of worship)
* [Faith Voices letter](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/590789143e00be8692d38a5c/t/59935d5edb29d634de186d30/1502829921769/FinalLetter_HOUSE_header.PDF) opposing the change signed by more than 4,500 faith leaders from various denominations
* A 2017 poll by the National Association of Evangelicals revealing that [89 percent of evangelical pastors](https://www.nae.net/pastors-shouldnt-endorse-politicians/) say it is wrong for preachers to endorse candidates from the pulpit
* Letter from [state law enforcement officials](https://www.givevoice.org/sites/default/files/NASCO%20Letter%20to%20Congressional%20Leaders%20re%20Johnson%20Amendment%208.23.2017.pdf) from across the country who oppose weakening the Johnson Amendment

###