



Wyoming Nonprofit Network

*The Wyoming Nonprofit Network believes that **remaining nonpartisan** is vital to the work of charitable nonprofits and joins the National Council of Nonprofits and organizations across the country in opposing the repeal or weakening of the Johnson Amendment.*

The Johnson Amendment is a provision in the U.S. tax code enacted in 1954 that prohibits 501(c)3 organizations from endorsing or opposing political candidates. Violators of the amendment risk loss of tax-exempt status. It was renewed and expanded in 1987 and signed by President Reagan.

The Wyoming Nonprofit Network believes that nonpartisanship protects the **integrity and independence** of charitable nonprofits, houses of worship and foundations. Remaining nonpartisan – that is, not endorsing or contributing to candidates – **is vital to the work of our state’s charitable nonprofits**. It enables organizations to address community challenges and welcome the problem-solving skills of all residents, without the distraction of party labels. It enables our members to work with elected officials of all parties at the local, state, and federal levels to address community needs. Keeping this protection in place is essential to nonprofit missions.

A broad spectrum of organizations **are united in opposition** to any effort to repeal or weaken the Johnson Amendment. A community letter of support opposing any changes to the Johnson Amendment has been signed by more than 100 denominations, 5,800 nonprofits and 4,300 religious leaders. The Wyoming specific letter is attached.

Must-pass legislation, like the House Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, have included language that threatens the Johnson Amendment. While the language was removed at the last minute, the Congressional Budget Office determined it would cost treasury \$2.1 billion, as money would be funneled through newly “partisan” nonprofits. We oppose any effort to weaken the Johnson Amendment, including a rider on the FY 2019 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill.

We at the Wyoming Nonprofit Network encourage charities to advocate for their missions on policy matters. They have full legal rights to express their views on policy matters; they just can’t endorse, oppose, or give money to candidates for public office. Charitable nonprofits help policymakers every day by providing analysis, expressing views on legislation, regulations, and ballot measures, and bringing constituents together to debate the issues of the day.

We urge Wyoming’s congressional leaders to express support for retaining the current law’s protection of nonprofit nonpartisanship.