

February 12, 2013

Dear Members of the Ways and Means Committee

For many years this Country has encouraged philanthropists thru tax deductions to support charitable organizations meeting the needs of individuals suffering from poverty, assisting victims of disaster, enhancing the cultural and spiritual development of individuals, and the thousands of programs designed to meet the needs of unborn babies to our oldest citizens. Many of these charitable organizations are finding they need more support each year to meet the ever increasing needs of those they serve.

Any tax legislation that would discourage a philanthropist would have tragic outcomes. Charitable organizations work their budgets hard and they qualify those they provide services to make sure the right folks are being served. Any action taken that would decrease support from philanthropists would irrevocably damage the fabric of this delicately balanced life support system that charitable organizations provide.

The current tax code for charitable deductions is functional and equitable:

- The current tax code treats every taxpayer who claims the deduction equitably, with the exception of the wealthiest donors who currently face a significant cap.
- The Independent Sector (IS) research suggests that a \$1 tax benefit produces approximately \$3 in effective public assistance through charitable organizations.
- IS provides this important perspective – “Charitable giving is not a path to amassing greater wealth or accumulating tangible personal assets.” Rather, charitable giving is an effective way for donors to assist all Americans who are in need.
- The charitable deduction is a strong and important motivation for philanthropists. Funds given to charitable organizations should not require additional tax to be paid by the donor.

We realize there are a good number of tax proposals under discussion and strongly encourage a carefully crafted proposal that would keep the charitable deduction in place as an incentive and benefit to those who give to change lives.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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Director of Major & Planned Gifts