

American Arts Alliance * American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
American Association of Museums * American Society of Association Executives
Association of Jewish Family & Children's Agencies * Child Welfare League of America
Communities in Schools, Inc. * Goodwill Industries International, Inc. * Independent Sector
Lutheran Services in America * March of Dimes * National Association of Independent Schools
National Council of Nonprofit Associations * National Human Services Assembly
The Salvation Army, United States * United Jewish Communities * United Negro College Fund
United Way of America * Volunteers of America * YMCA of the USA * Youth Service America

November 4, 2005

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Max Baucus
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators,

As leading national charities, we urge you to support legislation that would strengthen charities and the communities we serve. The Senate CARE Act (S. 1780) contains provisions addressing these important needs, and we support this legislation as introduced by Sens. Rick Santorum and Joseph Lieberman.

Many of our organizations have been leaders in the ongoing efforts to assist the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In the wake of these disasters, it is now more important than ever to ensure that both charitable organizations and charitable giving remain strong, not just in the immediate aftermath, but for long term disaster recovery efforts that will stretch over the coming years.

As Congress takes action on the Senate CARE Act, we urge you to include the following provisions, all of which are included in the bill as introduced:

- A tax incentive that provides the 83 million Americans who do not itemize an opportunity to deduct a portion of their charitable contributions;
- Incentives for individuals to give tax-free contributions from their Individual Retirement Accounts for charitable purposes;
- Tax incentives for an estimated \$2 billion worth of food donations from farmers, restaurants, and corporations to help those in need;
- Increased funding for the Social Services Block Grant and state authority to transfer up to 10 percent of TANF funds to SSBG programs;
- Increased funding for Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) sufficient to allow 900,000 low-income, working Americans to build assets that can be used to purchase a home, expand educational opportunity, or start a small business; and

- Funding for a Compassion Capital Fund to assist small community and faith-based organizations with technical assistance and expand their capacity to serve.

The undersigned organizations support policies that promote charitable giving and strengthen America's communities. We urge Congress and the President to work together once again this year to support these important goals.

Respectfully yours,

American Arts Alliance
American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
American Association of Museums
American Society of Association Executives
The Arc of the U.S.
Association of Jewish Family & Children's Agencies
Association of Performing Arts Presenters
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
Camp Fire USA
Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest
Child Welfare League of America
Communities in Schools, Inc.
Dance/USA
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Goodwill Industries International, Inc.
HIPPI USA
Independent Sector
Lutheran Services in America
March of Dimes
National Association of Independent Schools
National Council of Nonprofit Associations
National Human Services Assembly
National Low Income Housing Coalition
Opera America
Theatre Communications Group
The Salvation Army, United States
United Cerebral Palsy
United Jewish Communities
United Negro College Fund
United Way of America
Volunteers of America
YMCA of the USA
Youth Service America