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November 5, 2007

The Honorable
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative _____:

On behalf of Independent Sector, a coalition of charities, foundations and corporate giving programs, I am writing to express our strong support for a one-year extension of the IRA charitable rollover provision and other charitable giving incentives included in H.R.3996, the Temporary Tax Relief Act of 2007.

Since it was enacted in August 2006, the current IRA charitable rollover tax incentive has helped nonprofits enrich lives and strengthen communities across the country and around the world. By eliminating the barrier in the tax law that had previously discouraged transfers from individual retirement accounts to charities, the rollover has enabled Americans aged 70½ and older to make millions of dollars of new contributions to nonprofits – including hospitals, museums, educational institutions, and religious organizations – that benefit people every day. The IRA charitable rollover is particularly helpful for those older Americans who do not itemize their tax deductions and would not otherwise receive any tax benefit for their charitable contributions.

The Temporary Tax Relief Act also renews for one year several other provisions from last year's Pension Protection Act that deserve to be continued: an enhanced tax deduction for gifts of property for conservation purposes; and enhanced deductions for corporate contributions of food and book inventories.

Without action by Congress in the coming weeks these charitable giving incentives will expire at the end of this year, thus depriving thousands of charitable organizations of the resources needed to serve the public good. We recognize that reasonable people can disagree about the selection or need for offsets in the underlying bill. We are concerned, however, that defeat of this measure and the expiration of the charitable extenders will hurt the people and communities we serve and who benefit the most from these incentives. We therefore urge you to vote for final passage of H.R.3996, the Temporary Tax Relief Act of 2007, when it comes to the House floor this week.

Respectfully,

Patricia Read
Senior Vice President,
Public Policy and Government Affairs
Independent Sector