[DATE]

[NAME]

[ADDRESS]

Dear [NAME]:

As a [nonprofit/private foundation/community foundation], it is a privilege to serve the community in your district. We are proud to play an important role in providing jobs, creating opportunities, supporting the vulnerable, spurring research and fostering innovation.

These challenging times require a constant source of ideas and solutions, particularly as federal lawmakers seek to streamline the tax code, raise revenue, and reduce the budget deficit. As a philanthropic leader on the frontlines working to ensure critical services to our community are provided, we know this is not a time for political expedience. We need a thorough and honest analysis of the consequences of tax policy.

Tax and budget decisions in Washington, D.C. have cascading consequences for our communities. That is why we are so concerned about some proposed tax policy changes that would hurt philanthropy’s effectiveness. It would mean disaster for our nonprofits and the millions who rely on the generosity of donors at all income levels.

Fortunately, you/many lawmakers in Washington understand the value of philanthropy. We are encouraged that the House Ways and Means Committee recently approved a number of measures that would protect and enhance philanthropy’s ability to serve communities throughout America. For example, one proposed bill would make the IRA charitable rollover permanent, allowing donors to give with more certainty. Another would simplify the private foundation excise tax, freeing up time and resources for foundations to spend where they are needed most.

But there is still cause for great concern. Other potentially harmful proposals remain on the table. According to the American Enterprise Institute, the proposed 28 percent cap on the value of charitable donations could bring down giving levels by as much as $9.4 billion the first year if enacted. This translates into lost jobs, reduction of economic development, and decrease in support for the most vulnerable. Moreover, a proposal in House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp’s tax reform plan would impose a floor on the charitable deduction, denying donors the full value of their deduction. This would cause a decline in charitable giving, especially for those people making smaller donations.

Another harmful proposal would impose a stringent payout requirement on donor advised funds (DAFs). DAFs are unique vehicles that allow people to “give where they live” and channel their philanthropic giving to benefit their community. We should keep the current law, which permits community foundations to hold and manage donor-advised funds that can benefit the community for years to come.

Philanthropy is uniquely positioned to help provide a path to success for millions – often in ways government and for-profit entities cannot. We work in communities every day to combine resources, respond to emerging needs, and deliver innovative solutions and results that extend for generations. For example, foundation investments generate billions of dollars in economic activity and millions of jobs over time. Nonprofits – which are supported largely through charitable giving – generate more than $1 trillion every year through jobs and services. And at time when our country’s economy needs it the most, nonprofits employ 1 in 10 U.S. workers, resulting in nearly 14 million jobs.

Right here in [INSERT LOCAL EXMAPLE (75-100 words) OF COMMUNITY PHILANTHROPY AT WORK – A PROGRAM OR SERVICE PROVIDED WITH THE SUPPORT OF CHARITABLE GIVING. INSERT A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WHAT THE PROGRAM DOES TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES AND TRANSFORM LIVES, WHO AND HOW MANY PEOPLE IT SERVES AND THE RESULTS IT HAS ACHIEVED.]

Changes to the tax code can enhance and expand the work we do. We appreciate the tough decisions you face in working to overcome America’s fiscal problems, but cutting off a lifeline to communities in need does more harm than good. We must work together to strengthen and protect the philanthropic sector and ensure there is a clear understanding about the vital role of philanthropy in building a strong, resilient economy and thriving communities.

Sincerely,