**Philanthropy in America – Vital to Thriving Communities**

Philanthropy’s contributions to American society have produced countless benefits that have extended across generations. The polio vaccine, road surface markings on our highways, Sesame Street, 911 emergency system, and public libraries are just a few examples of how philanthropy has stimulated innovation in our country. Philanthropy has a unique ability to think outside the box and create results in ways government and the for-profit sector often cannot.

**Giving in America (according to Giving USA)**

Government funds account for only one-third of the revenues of America’s nonprofit organizations. The rest comes from private giving.[[1]](#endnote-1)

* Americans donated an estimated **$316.23 billion** to charitable causes in 2012.
* Giving by foundations was an estimated **$45.74 billion** in 2012. Giving by community foundations grew 9.1 percent in 2012. (*Source:* *The Foundation Center)*

**Philanthropy’s Role in Supporting Thriving Communities**

Philanthropic giving is a deep-rooted American value, linked to thriving communities and a sustained economic recovery. Largely support through philanthropy, America’s nonprofits:

* generate more than **$1 trillion** every year in the form of jobs and human services;
* employed one in ten U.S. workers, providing **13.7 million jobs**;
* employees received roughly 9 percent of wages paid in the U.S. – nearly **$600 billion** a year.

**Local Impact of Harmful Tax Policy Changes**

Limiting charitable giving incentives or making other harmful changes to the tax code would put severe strains on an already fragile economic recovery. It would impede the ability of philanthropy to employ millions of people, support vital services, and develop innovative solutions to our most pressing challenges.

**With the economy struggling to fully recover and America’s nonprofit sector asked to do more with less, now is not the time to diminish the ability of philanthropy.**

For Example: Michigan is already seeing how changes in tax policy can hurt charitable giving and vital nonprofit services. Earlier this year, the state enacted a set of new tax laws, including the removal of a tax credit for charitable contributions**. Last year, donations were down 28 percent** **overall** for community foundations across the state the state, according to the Michigan Council of Foundations.

[INSERT LOCAL OR STATE LEVEL EXAMPLES OF HOW PHILANTHOPY SUPPORTS THRIVING COMMUNITIES]

1. Aspen Institute <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/NPGOVERNMENT.PDF> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)