

SURVEY REGARDING THE JOHNSON AMENDMENT

N = 169

Survey Respondents: PANO Members vs. Non-PANO Members

PANO Members: **60% (99)**

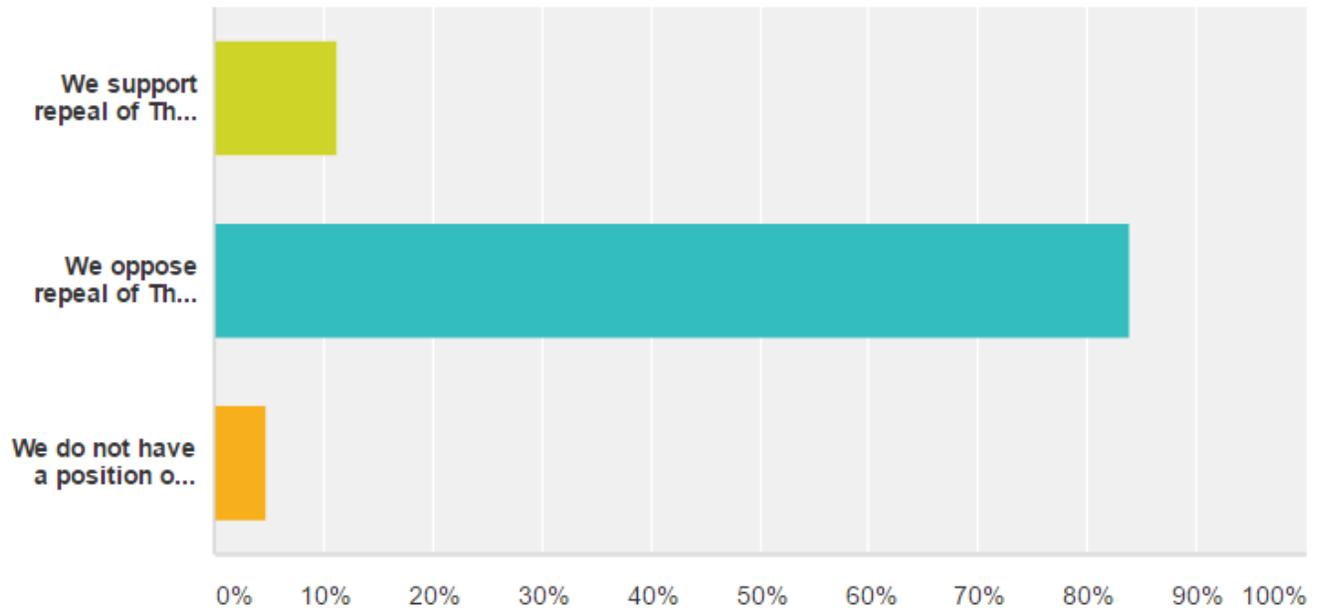
Non-PANO Members: **40% (67)**

Figure 1:

Survey Respondents Who Support, Oppose or Do Not Have a Position on the Repeal

Our position on the Johnson Amendment is:

Answered: 169 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
▼ We support repeal of The Johnson Amendment.	11.24% 19
▼ We oppose repeal of The Johnson Amendment. (Keep it like it is.)	84.02% 142
▼ We do not have a position on the The Johnson Amendment.	4.73% 8
Total	169

REASONS SURVEY RESPONDENTS GAVE FOR THEIR POSITIONS ON THE JOHNSON AMENDMENT

REASONS WHY SURVEY PARTICIPANTS OPPOSE REPEAL OF THE JOHNSON AMENDMENT (WHY THEY WANT TO KEEP IT LIKE IT IS)

Maintains Neutrality—So Critical Perception of Nonprofit Integrity (40 Responses)

- Nonprofits are committed to the public good, which warrants neutrality.
- We need support from both sides so we should just be advocates for our issues
- I think allowing nonprofits to participate in campaigns of individuals would be detrimental to them as it would politicize groups and alienate members/potential members who may support common issues but not particular candidates.
- If we extend our view beyond our national border, we find that nonprofits/NGOs are often credited with destabilizing governments because of their affinity with common people and their access to capital. As a result, they are often restrained, excluded, even persecuted, which hampers their abilities to pursue their missions. I experienced this first hand in China. I would favor a more gracious interpretation of The Johnson Amendment but not its repeal.
- Nonprofits need to be able to focus on policy and to address issues rather than partisan politics.
- Could force nonprofits into political campaigns. See it as the first step in undermining the position on charitable organizations.
- This puts us in an untenable situation. We do not want to, nor should we, ever support an individual candidate for public office. We must remain neutral (bipartisan) to maintain our reputations.
- The last objection I will make is the most important: Nonprofits stand to lose so much if they become considered as political instruments. The integrity, nonpartisan nature and public benefits aspects of their work will be called into question due to political considerations and their ability to attract funding from broad segments of the public severely reduced. The result: even greater dissatisfaction with government and diminished quality of life for us all.
- Preserving public trust and organizational integrity is paramount.
- While we can and should advocate, we should be nonpartisan organizations separated from elections.
- Charities need to be safeguarded from being swept up in the partisan rancor present in today's America.
- We need the public to have faith in our charitable missions. There are other means to legally advocate for candidates (c4s, PACs) that communities can use to do candidate work and advocate for their issues.
- We are a nonprofit center and we never take a position on anything political.
- 501(c)3s should remain apolitical as far as it is possible.
- Nonprofits need to avoid the polarizing effects of politics. If you take a stand favoring a candidate, you become the enemy of the opposition
- All organizations should maintain apolitical visions because they help us to reach out to major groups of people without the distraction of partisanship affiliation
- Public trust in nonprofits remaining nonpolitical is essential
- I believe that w/o the Johnson Amendment, our country and the work of non-profits will become even more politicized.
- There should be some measure of neutrality for nonprofits.
- Maintaining a non-partisan stance is essential to the ability to reach all audiences with our own important messages.
- Appearances matter. 501-c-3 status should not be used for political purposes. When that happens, the trust and integrity of our organizations will come into question. Not a good thing.
- Nonprofits should be nonpartisan
- Our library is a place for an exchange of ideas and information, not campaigning. We are a neutral space, rather than a partisan one.
- We believe it is important for charitable organizations to be non-partisan.
- Non-profit organizations serve all people and shouldn't be placed in the position of choosing one party or the other.
- It undermines the credibility of existing 501-c-3s.
- Nonprofits should not be politicized.
- Our nonprofit operates in an apolitical manner.
- The field needs to be even for all non-profits. A lot of non-profits have in their charter that they do not get involved in political actions.
- We are firmly behind not changing this law. Politics and non-profits don't mix.
- I am concerned that the 501-c-3 designation is being misused for political purposes and if it continues to degrade what are true charitable organizations, then the designation itself becomes corrupted.
- Our mission is supported by persons from many political viewpoints and bringing politics into the mix would only cause problems.

- Involvement in political matters violates the essence of non-profit activity. Non-profits are often referred to as the third component of organized activity in the US: private enterprise, government and non-profit. Let's keep it that way.
- The polarity facing politics today has a person or organization taking a stand automatically the enemy of the opposition party. Nonprofits need to transcend politics.
- This acts as a protection for non-profits. It enables non-profits to retain their integrity and their mission.
- I fear favoritism to certain charities, and exclusion of others if this Act is repealed. We are extremely conscientious about keeping our donors informed about where their donor dollars are going. It seems an unfair advantage or disadvantage to non profits if we start using our power to influence politics. I feel it is unethical to muddy the water.
- It is potentially politicizing what we do.
- As a nonprofit we enjoy bipartisan support of our mission which we feel might be compromised if political action was permitted. We have very effective advocacy avenues that inform government officials.
- Nonprofits should be nonpartisan.
- Nonprofits should not be political.

Enforces Separation of Church and State (14 Responses)

- Enforces the separation of Church and State
- All nonprofits, but especially religious organizations should not mix their mission with politics. Separation of church and state.
- Separation of church and state.
- We are concerned about churches being unleashed politically, while nonprofits are not.
- Religious organizations have a perfect right at this time to any political speech they like. I can see no reason why they should exercise it AND remain tax exempt. Effectively that asks those of us who don't share their religious beliefs to subsidize their political speech.
- Separation of church and state
- Separation of church and state
- I certainly don't believe that churches should dictate to their flock how to vote. The Johnson Amendment is an important check against electioneering from the pulpit.
- Keep religion out of politics
- PA has many non-secular organizations pushing antiquated agendas.
- The critical value of separation of church and state
- Separation of Church and state. Separation of nonprofits/community benefit organizations and politics
- Separation of church and state is one of the basic tenets of our constitution. The addition of the political animosity reinforces the need to oppose repeal of the Johnson Amendment.
- Separation of church and state!

Do Not Want nonprofit Dollars Funding Political Agendas (13 Responses)

- Repeal is likely to result in formation of nonprofit PACS
- Potential for "hiding" campaign contributions; politicians are not charitable causes
- Main concern is that we would see pressure to contribute to or support campaigns for elected officials who have decision-making authority over public grant programs that we access to advance our vision.
- It would be a disaster if churches are able to endorse and raise money for candidates. We do NOT need to have nonprofits giving money to candidates.
- Removing the barriers of nonpartisan support from 501(c)(3) and making them available for the transference of funding for political gains appears to be a Pandora's Box
- We are concerned about nonprofits being pressured to support and contribute to political candidates.
- I agree that charities should not use funds to support political candidates.
- We don't like the possibility of essentially tax-deductible contributions supporting candidates.
- There is too much money and corporate influence in politics now, this would only make the problem worse. As a nonprofit I do not want to be put in a position to need to spend our stakeholder's money for an equal voice in legislative matters that impact our mission.
- Organizational money is tainting our political process, expanding it is not a positive.
- I don't support financing campaigns with tax exempt dollars; will create competition for tax exempt donations that will hurt cbos; nonprofit tax breaks are meant to support benefits to the community, not to politicians.
- If charities are allowed to politic, I think that donors who think they are donating to a mission or cause are being duped if those funds then go into campaigning.
- Donations to churches, which are tax-exempt, would be legally used to support candidates/causes. Of course we all know that churches already do advocate to their members their political stances. IMO churches should be classified as 501-c-4 organizations if their political activities continue.

Maintains Focus on Mission rather than Political Agendas (10 Responses)

- It ensures nonprofits organizations are serving their mission rather than the whims of politicians.
- Nonprofits are committed...to advocacy and education beyond pure politics.
- 501(c)(3)s should have a social welfare mission, and repeal could result in dilution of that focus in favor of electioneering
- It is critical to work of nonprofit community organizations to remain nonpartisan in their service to our communities.
- The repeal would open the door to corruption and political influence to nonprofits who are supposed to serve the community with no political connection. It may start out with good intentions, but it would go south real quickly once big money is involved
- Nonprofits need to be pure in their goals and not part of any other agenda, nor vulnerable to manipulation
- Repealing this amendment would promote candidate driven desires as oppose to community needs all while giving the donor the ability to write off their "donation."
- We believe non-profits should only advocate for mission-related issues & not endorse or oppose political candidates.
- Nonprofits serve all people, regardless of their political views. The political environment is toxic in this country; non-profit service providers should advocate in a respectful and civil manner, but in a way that serves their missions and not based on partisan politics.
- Don't want to be in a position to grant favors to politicians

Negative Impact on Agency Funding (6 Responses)

- The repeal could cause erosion of donor support for libraries and elimination of those that are 501(c)3s.
- Libraries help to solve community problems in a bipartisan manner. If this could result in partisan politics supporting libraries, would they split them into democratic and republic libraries? Not an appropriate model for problem solving.
- Donations to a charity are impressed with a charitable trust to support and further the charitable organization's mission and purpose. The Johnson Amendment preserves the resources of a charitable organization for use on its mission while permitting the organization to advocate for mission-related issues.
- As a small to mid-size nonprofit, the agency currently benefits to be being on perceived "equal footing" with other 501c3s. We anticipate not being able to "compete" should this change.
- 501-c-3s and religious organizations receive grants and contracts directly from the federal government. Repealing the Johnson Amendment would allow for extreme cronyism and nepotism between 501-c-3s/religious organizations and the federal government. I oppose repeal of the Johnson Amendment.
- Once we pick a side? It will influence our donors.

Current Law Works (6 Responses)

- We believe it is a grievous mistake to repeal The Johnson Amendment. Nonprofits are adequately protected under the amendment.
- It works
- Leave as is
- It was created for a reason and those reasons are still valid.
- It is working as intended.
- Your 3rd bullet point is KEY! (It works.)

People Who Depend on Charity Will Suffer (4 Responses)

- If charities become a political ping-pong ball, it is the people who depend on charities that will suffer the most.
- Remaining nonpartisan protects the already exploited low income, minority's community we serve.
- It would alienate portions of our patrons, who might not feel welcome in our facility.
- As a non-profit, we have too many opportunities to influence voters. It would bring about a disadvantage because most of us would be watching out for our own jobs as well as clients' needs.

Nonprofits can already advocate for issues (3 Responses)

- There already exist legal avenues for nonprofit leaders to express themselves in the political arena. This is attempt to solve a problem that doesn't really exist, but does have great potential to impede the standing and hinder the work of nonprofits.
- I don't think that nonprofits should advocate for particular candidates. They are already free to advocate for issues and that is enough.
- It is already possible to talk to legislators about issues that are important to us.

Problems Outweigh Benefits (3 Responses)

- Although I understand the free speech argument that religious leaders should be able to discuss and recommend political actions to their flock, I suggest that changing existing law will cause more problems than it would solve.
- Further, if the current IRS code in enforcing the Amendment is seen as heavy handed, one can only imagine how many pages of IRS code, rules and advisory rulings will be required to enforce the Amendment as government tries to sort out the actions, intent and effect of who in a nonprofit said or wrote or disseminated what to whom, when and whether or it involved the use of “charitable contributions.”
- This makes the donations of funds to non-profits very murky and likely cause lots of problems for charities and political candidates in the future.
- There is too much chance of illegal activities

Nonprofits Should Not Influence Elections (2 Responses)

- Nonprofits should be prohibited from influencing elections
- Electioneering is a slippery slope.

Negative Impact on Cross-Agency Collaboration (2 Responses)

- The viability of the organizational collaboration in the future
- Charity leaders must work together on the serious challenges facing their communities. Repeal of the Johnson Amendment will make this less likely due to the divisive nature of politics.

Churches Should Pay Taxes If They Want to Engage in Politics (1 Response)

- My take is very practical in nature. These organizations do not pay taxes and are not expected to uphold any aspect of the political process. If the church wants to invest in moral wars that strip Americans of their basic rights, then they can pay taxes and help fund our country.

May Promote a Boom in Bogus 501-c-3s (1 Response)

Due to PANO's education (1 Response)

- All the arguments you listed for leaving things as they are! I work for a nonprofit and volunteer for several but am not in leadership at any.

REASONS WHY PEOPLE SUPPORT REPEAL OF THE JOHNSON AMENDMENT

More Political Freedom for Churches/Nonprofit Leaders (6 Responses)

- Religious reasons
- I do feel the right of pastors should be changed. The bill is too restricted from that point.
- Support repeal, but with the financial stipulation of the Commission on Accountability and Policy for Religious Organizations
- Because churches and other non-profit officials should have the freedom to speak, be heard and be represented.
- I feel that 501s should be allowed to have a voice in politics
- Considering the vast numbers of people we impact and the need to work with elected officials, nonprofit organizations should be able to convey which candidates profess to support our activities and/or values. In the interest of improving political discourse and recognizing variations of opinion, there may need to be some minor rules surrounding endorsing or opposing candidates, but in general, we favor a full embracing of freedom of speech for all, whether they are individuals or nonprofit organizations.

Freedom of Speech (4 Responses)

- First Amendment
- Nonprofits should be able to express opinions on political candidates. If a candidate is running on a platform that is completely inconsistent with a nonprofit's mission, that nonprofit should be free to openly oppose that candidate. If donors to the nonprofit don't agree, they don't have to continue supporting that nonprofit organization anymore.
- Freedom of expression is a basic right
- Freedom of Speech is a constitutional right

REASONS WHY PEOPLE HAD NO POSITION ON THE JOHNSON AMENDMENT

- All the talk seems to center around ministers. No one is looking at the vast number of other 501c3s out there that are not religious and how they can affect the political arena. I cannot condone actions that seem covertly directed toward a specific group within a larger group.
- GWP has no formal position on the Johnson Amendment. It does have a position on nonprofit advocacy which states, "GWP supports the rights of charitable organizations to continue their involvement in public policy debates in accordance with the current rules and regulations. GWP opposes additional limitations on the ability of nonprofit organizations to participate in the public policy process." That policy was predicated on the assumption of nonprofits remaining nonpartisan. We will be revisiting that policy position this Spring.
- We have not taken up the matter during a board meeting so we have no official position. I have a personal opinion but that is not the same as an organizational position.
- Nonprofits should not be allowed to do fundraising for candidates. Some nonprofits have more funds to do so where others do not. The field needs to be even for all nonprofits. A lot of nonprofits have in their charter that they do not get involved in political actions. As for endorsing, or opposing candidates, I believe that should be allowed. This may be the only way some people learn about what a candidate stands for.