

Alliance for *Charitable* Reform

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Our Belief

Philanthropy exemplifies the American ideal of private action in the public interest, demonstrating our faith in the capacity of individual citizens not only to create wealth, but also—voluntarily—to care for their country, their communities, and their fellows without undue reliance on government.

Philanthropy shows our commitment to the wellbeing of our neighbors—and of strangers in need. For many Americans, philanthropy also reflects deep religious faith and a determination to live by the Golden Rule. Philanthropy is about receiving as well as giving, and a free and vibrant civil society summons its members to create and lead organizations, programs and institutions out of a sense of higher purpose that transcends their own interests and base motives.

Philanthropy rests upon the premise that both recipients and donors have the capacity for self-government and wise choices. We reject the view that participants in philanthropy should be viewed with automatic suspicion: not as citizens capable of successful, public-minded self-rule, but rather as wrongdoers in need of policing.

Philanthropy serves as an indispensable laboratory of innovation in addressing many of society's greatest challenges. The independence of thought and diversity of interests and perspective produced by having so many committed private actors is the wellspring of this sector's vitality, and must therefore be protected.

We deplore the transgressions of a tiny minority within our community and urge that the laws they have violated be conscientiously and vigorously enforced. Yet we also insist that government's most important role vis-à-vis the philanthropic sector is to vouchsafe its millions of honorable members the freedom and encouragement they need to do their best. This vital and diverse element of civil society should be honored as one of America's finest achievements and as evidence of people's capacity for individual initiative and self-governance, not burdened with costly and potentially crippling constraints on its important work.

Our Objectives

- To reform and strengthen foundations and other philanthropic organizations;
- To ensure and promote the highest standards of integrity, efficiency and effectiveness across the philanthropic sector;
- To preserve the distinctive contributions of all foundations, including small, operating, and family foundations, to American life;

- To protect the creativity and diversity of the philanthropic sector;
- To safeguard the freedom of foundations to use their best judgment in carrying out their charitable objectives;
- To promote common-sense laws and regulations that impose strict penalties on wrongdoers without trapping the innocent or wasting charitable assets.
- To encourage individuals and families to engage in philanthropy; and
- To expand and celebrate America's leadership as the most generous and charitable nation on earth.

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The Alliance for Charitable Reform is a project of the Philanthropy Roundtable, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. The Alliance is proud to represent charitable organizations, including private foundations, and specifically family foundations, as well as public charities.