INDEPENDENT SECTOR
A vital voice for us all

Chair
William E. Trueheart
The Pittsburgh Foundation

Vice Chair
Gary L. Yates
The California Wellness Foundation

Treasurer
Paula Van Ness
Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation

Secretary
Hilary Pennington
Jobs for the Future

President and CEO
Diana Aviv

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Edward H. Able, Jr.
American Association of Museums

Kathleen W. Buechel
Alcoa Foundation

Robert W. Edgar
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA

Lewis M. Feldstein
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

David S. Ford
Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation

Barry D. Gaberman
The Ford Foundation

Brian A. Gallagher
United Way of America

Darell Hammond
KaBOOM! Inc.

J. Bryan Hehir
Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Boston

J.D. Hokoyama
Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics

Kevin Klose
National Public Radio

Stanley S. Litow
IBM Foundation

Janet Murguia
National Council of La Raza

William D. Novelli
AARP

John R. Seffrin
American Cancer Society

Edward Skloot
Surdna Foundation

Donald M. Stewart
University of Chicago

Arturo Vargas
National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials

Luz A. Vega-Marquis
Marguerite Casey Foundation

M. Cass Wheeler
American Heart Association

William S. White
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

Ruth A. Wooden
Public Agenda

The Honorable
John W. Gardner (1912-2002)
Founding Chair

Brian O'Connell
Founding President and President Emeritus

2006 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 22-24, MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL

May 3, 2006

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable William M. Thomas
Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Max S. Baucus
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
Ranking Member
House Committee on Ways and Means
1106 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Grassley and Thomas and Ranking Members Baucus and Rangel:

I am writing on behalf of Independent Sector to express our strong support for the package of charitable giving tax incentives and reforms that has been amended and offered by the Joint Committee on Taxation and Senate Finance Committee staff for inclusion in the final conference bill for the Tax Relief Act of 2005 (H.R. 4297).

Independent Sector is a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of more that 500 charitable nonprofits and philanthropic institutions, which collectively represents tens of thousands of charitable groups as well as millions of donors and volunteers serving a wide range of causes in regions across the country. We have worked since our inception to assist our member organizations to meet the highest standards of ethical practice, accountability, and effectiveness. We assembled the Panel on the Nonprofit Sector, a broad effort by thousands of charitable nonprofit organizations to which presented to Congress a comprehensive package of legislative reforms that would strengthen government oversight, accountability and transparency of charitable organizations, and public trust in the important work of charitable organizations in June, 2005.

The package of charitable incentives and reforms that is now being offered to the conference by the Senate Finance Committee will strengthen the work of our sector by deterring and punishing abuses by individuals who exploit charitable organizations for their personal gain, without imposing unnecessary costs or hardships on reputable charities. Moreover, the proposed reforms strike the right balance between legitimate government oversight and protecting the independence that charitable organizations need to remain innovative and effective. We strongly encourage you to include them in the tax bill you are now debating.

Sincerely,

Diana Aviv

Diana Aviv
President and CEO

1200 Eighteenth Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036 phone 202-467-6100 fax 202-467-6101 www.independentsector.org