

# Take The Pledge

It's On Us: The Nonprofit Voter Empowerment Project



## Leave No Power on the Table Pledge

*Connecting Nonprofit Mission to Civic Engagement and Advocacy*

### Nonprofit Power: Securing Nonprofits' Seat at the Decision-Making Table

Since its inception, the nonprofit sector has served as the bridge between government and community — a role that has ultimately defined America. Yet, despite our scale, size, and significant contributions, nonprofits are often on the “outside looking in” when public policies are decided.

Candidates and incumbents for elected office are [more inclined to engage](#) communities with high voter participation rates. Therefore, when the communities we serve participate in democratic processes, policymakers are more likely to prioritize the needs of nonprofit constituents and the policy priorities of nonprofit organizations that serve them.

Independent Sector's "[Leave No Power on the Table](#)" initiative is an educational series and nonpartisan pledge campaign that equips nonprofits with the resources and support they need to strengthen their influence and better serve their constituents through advocacy, civic engagement, and voter participation. In the third module of this initiative, you'll find resources that will equip your organization with effective strategies to leverage your power and engage directly with policymakers year-round.

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**Nonprofits' Guide to Engaging Constituents After an Election:** Our democracy relies on ordinary people to ensure that elections are conducted efficiently and to guarantee that every citizen's vote is counted. This [Post-Election Resource Guide](#) will help nonprofits serve as reliable sources of information to help resolve questions and confusion by mobilizing their constituencies.

**Influencing Policy Through Administrative Advocacy:** The beginning of a new year, legislative session, or administrative term provides an optimal opportunity for nonprofits to engage with government officials and pursue policy change. This [fact sheet](#) offers practical guidance on how nonprofits can use administrative advocacy as a tool to influence rules and regulations across all levels of government.

**Advancing Systems-Level Change Through Transition Advocacy:** The period between an election and the swearing-in of newly elected officials, often referred to as the [transition phase](#) in the legislative process, is a crucial but often overlooked window of opportunity for nonprofit advocates. As the third-largest private employer, nonprofits comprise nearly six percent of our nation's Gross Domestic Product. This makes our organizations an essential partner to government and public agencies. As such, nonprofits can leverage this power through early preparation to [influence policy and advocacy](#). This "[Preparing for Change](#)" fact sheet offers practical guidance on high-impact strategies to ensure the needs of our organizations and constituents are top of mind for all decision-makers at the start of a new administration, legislative session, and electoral term. Independent Sector's [2024 transition memo](#) offers one example of how charitable organizations can use this [transition phase](#) to make the case for partnership.

**Translating Nonprofit Priorities Into Public Policies:** [Nonpartisan advocacy](#) is a longstanding vehicle through which changemakers have advanced systems change, shaped public discourse, and made progress towards shared needs and causes. By engaging in advocacy, nonprofit organizations can have a far-reaching and positive impact by helping elected officials and the communities we serve understand how the policies that govern them impact their daily lives. To achieve this, we must first [develop policy agendas](#) that [translate nonprofit priorities into legislative policies](#). View pages 25-26 in the [Nonprofit Voter Empowerment Playbook](#) to develop an advocacy action plan tailored to your organization's unique needs, capacity, and services.

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**Set the Record Straight:** Voting records, sometimes referred to as [legislative scorecards](#), are compilations of votes cast by elected officials on bills or measures across every level of government. Legislative scorecards can be useful tools to educate nonprofit stakeholders and raise awareness about issues of importance. This nonpartisan resource can also be used to inform advocacy strategies, target mobilization efforts, and help advocates achieve accountability by providing nonprofit stakeholders with information about how incumbent legislators performed over the duration of a legislative term or year. This [fact sheet](#) offers tangible guidance on how nonprofits can develop and distribute legislative scorecards and voting records in accordance with IRS rules and guidelines.

**Preparing for the Possibility of a Politically Motivated Attack:** It's no secret that charitable nonprofits face a range of unique threats and challenges in today's political climate. In response to the widespread polarization, many organizations have been forced to make programmatic changes in how they advance their policy goals. Whether your mission intersects with politically charged terms like "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI); or simply involves hotly contested issues; nonprofits must be prepared to continue their mission-driven work in the face of controversy from every level and branch of government. These fact sheets offer tips on how [nonprofits](#) and [funders](#) can protect their hard-won progress through early preparation.