

MANP Advocacy Program Issue Advocacy Policy

Advocacy Program Purpose

- ▶ To build the capacity of the nonprofit sector in Maine to monitor and take action on public policy issues which affect the sector;
- ▶ To educate the public on the importance of Maine's charitable nonprofit sector; and
- ▶ To promote public policy that allows local and state-based nonprofits to thrive and serve their communities.

Issue Advocacy Policy Statement

MANP works to assure an environment that allows and supports Maine nonprofits to thrive and effectively serve their communities. To that end we work within the following policy guidelines:

Advocacy

Advocacy is an important role of the nonprofit sector. Advocacy is a vehicle through which nonprofits engage in the democratic process. Advocacy assists nonprofits to achieve their missions.

- ▶ MANP supports proposals that encourage the advocacy activities of the sector.
- ▶ MANP supports policies and proposals that build the capacity of nonprofits to advocate.
- ▶ MANP encourages policies, regulations and proposals that seek the voice of nonprofits on public policies.

Accountability

Nonprofits serve the community and as a result should function with integrity and efficiency and should address violations within the sector.

- ▶ MANP supports an appropriate level of government regulation and enforcement to protect the public's interest while upholding the integrity of the nonprofit sector.
- ▶ MANP promotes vigilance in maintaining excellence in the sector, speaks out against abuses of trust within the sector, and promotes the highest level of accountability within the sector.
- ▶ MANP encourages policies that strengthen the management capacity of nonprofits.

Tax Policy

Taxes and tax policy are important to nonprofits because taxes finance government programs and services, many of which are delivered by nonprofits or received directly by those served by nonprofits. Tax policy can also serve as an incentive for giving to charitable organizations.

- ▶ MANP supports policies that protect the tax-exempt status of nonprofits.
- ▶ MANP opposes tax initiatives that would result in dividing 501(c)(3) organizations based on subject matter and philosophy.
- ▶ MANP supports tax policies that increase charitable support for the sector.

The Essential Role of Government and Its Partnership with the Nonprofit Sector

It is the role and duty of government to provide for and promote the safety, prosperity and general welfare of its citizens. The nonprofit community is dedicated to the same goals of public service and should be a leader in advocating for policies that recognize and support the fulfillment of this primary mission of government.

- ▶ MANP supports nonprofit input on governmental policies, including the budget, that effect nonprofits or their constituents.
- ▶ MANP opposes policies that place unnecessary burdens on the contractual relationship between government and nonprofit service providers.
- ▶ MANP opposes policies that unnecessarily increase nonprofit business costs or interfere with their sound business practices.
- ▶ MANP supports activities that strengthen nonprofits' relationships with federal, state, county & local governments.

Charitable Giving and Volunteerism

Public policy should recognize and support the important roles of volunteer service and private philanthropy in improving the lives of citizens and the quality of life in Maine.

- ▶ MANP supports public policy that increases the number of volunteers.
- ▶ MANP opposes public policy that places undue burden on organizations that effectively utilize volunteers.
- ▶ In addition to favorable tax policy, MANP supports public policy that assists fundraising and increases charitable giving to the sector.

Implementation Criteria for Public Policy Initiatives

Fit

Does the issue/initiative match the mission of MANP and its members and fit within MANP's advocacy guidelines?

Impact

Does the issue/initiative have significant implications for MANP members and/or Maine's nonprofit organizations?

Support

Is there, or do we reasonably anticipate that there will be, general informed support for the proposed position among the members of the Maine Association of Nonprofits?

Credibility

Will MANP be perceived as a legitimately concerned and appropriate advocate for the position to be taken?