



Policy Engagement Protocols Adopted April 2012

Among the goals in Philanthropy West Virginia's strategic plan is "Leading: Philanthropy WV's members are served by our leading and collective voice. To advance this goal, Philanthropy WV works to:

- a. Cultivate relationships with stakeholders in state and federal government to provide decision making expertise and be a "go to" resource of policy makers
- b. Serve as the collective voice for our members that educates and advocates on the local, state and federal levels for initiatives, programs, policy, legislation, etc that advances the philanthropic sector in West Virginia

During 2012, Philanthropy WV will undertake policy engagement more actively than in the past. Its Board of Directors has determined that, in selected instances, Philanthropy WV's members and the broader nonprofit community may be best served by taking a public position on a policy matter, including legislation or regulations proposed at the city, county, state or federal level. Philanthropy WV's goal is to respond nimbly and flexibly when its involvement can help promote a vibrant and healthy philanthropic and nonprofit sector for the Mountain State.

Philanthropy WV's Public Policy Committee

Based on Philanthropy WV's mission and strategic plan, our Public Policy Committee will lead the organization's consideration of policy issues and generate recommendations for action. The Board of Directors will make final decisions on any action to be taken by the association.

Individuals serving on the Public Policy Committee will represent current Philanthropy WV member organizations. It will include representation by both board members and at-large members of the association.

Identification/ Selection of Policy Issues

Before Philanthropy WV becomes involved in a specific policy issue, the Public Policy Committee will consider the following guidelines:

- The issue strengthens the nonprofit sector or encourages philanthropic giving
- The issue directly or indirectly affects Philanthropy WV members' ability to conduct their philanthropy effectively, or affects Philanthropy WV itself
- The involvement of Philanthropy WV or its members could help shape the outcome of the issue
- Differences between Philanthropy WV members or types of members on the issue, if any, are known
- The current position or role of other associations and coalitions is known, in particular those of:

- Council on Foundations
- Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers
- Independent Sector
- West Virginia Nonprofit Association

Specific issues may be identified for consideration by Public Policy Committee members or staff. They may also be referred to the committee by the Board of Directors or submitted to the committee by a current member of Philanthropy WV.

Strategies for Policy Engagement

In support of or in opposition to a policy issue, Philanthropy WV may engage in a number of strategies, including:

- Informing members about the issue
- Asking members to engage in advocacy and lobbying as permitted by law
- Disseminating information and data to members and the public
- Signing or co-signing a letter
- Joining a coalition
- Contacting elected officials about the issue and about Philanthropy WV's position on it
- Contacting the media (i.e. submitting letters to the editor, op-ed pieces)
- Offering public testimony
- Contracting with public affairs or research firm

Upon review of a specific issue, Philanthropy WV may choose not to pursue any of the above strategies. The association may then work with other community actors in a non-public role or take no action.

In all its communications and interactions, Philanthropy WV will offer a constructive, solutions-oriented presence and tone. Philanthropy WV will at all times act within the limitations for nonprofit advocacy and lobbying activities set forth by the IRS and the Great State of West Virginia.

Process to Adopt A Position

Philanthropy WV will follow a process that enables oversight by its Board of Directors while also enabling time-sensitive action. As adopted by board of directors at their meeting on April 5, 2012, during FY2012 the process for taking a position on a policy issue is as follows:

1. The Public Policy Committee may make recommendations to the Philanthropy WV Board, or the Board may conclude that Philanthropy WV should take a public position with respect to an issue on which it is lawful and appropriate for Philanthropy WV to express an opinion.
2. The Philanthropy WV Board will promptly determine whether and how to proceed. If it decides that Philanthropy WV should take a position, it will advise the membership of the issue, the position it intends for Philanthropy WV to take, and the date on which the intended action will be taken.

This procedure will be in effect until the date of the Fall 2012 Annual Meeting of Philanthropy WV's membership. At that time, this procedure will be reviewed in open meeting, and if there is representative interest in revising the procedure, the Board will revisit the issue as appropriate.