

Meals On Wheels Association of America
Policy Statement On the Deductibility of Charitable Donations

Meals On Wheels programs across our country serve in excess of one million meals every day to a vulnerable population of seniors in need of good nutrition. These local community-based programs rely significantly on small charitable contributions from individual donors. These donations are used to supplement other sources of funding to enable them to produce and deliver meals needed to meet the growing demand for services from an aging society that is increasingly at risk of hunger.

Proposals have surfaced in Congress and in the Administration to amend the Internal Revenue Code to limit the deductibility of charitable contributions from individual donors. Because of the adverse impact these changes inevitably would have on organizations serving the most vulnerable and needy Americans, the Meals On Wheels Association of America (MOWAA) opposes any changes that would have the effect of eliminating or reducing charitable giving. MOWAA believes there are better approaches to raising revenues and addressing current budget issues.

However, if a change to the Internal Revenue Code affecting charitable deductions is unavoidable, MOWAA believes that a proposal affecting the fewest number of potential donors is preferable to an alternative that would impact all taxpayers. Particularly onerous would be a proposal to place a cap on the total amount of itemized deductions that a taxpayer could take. Affecting all taxpayers, this proposal would, if enacted, have a great impact on charities like Meals On Wheels programs which rely heavily on low-dollar contributions by average Americans. Because mortgage or tax deductions would likely reach the proposed cap, the likely result would be that charitable donations of many taxpayers would not be deductible and fewer would be made. This approach would substantially reduce the number and amounts of charitable donations critically needed by organizations like MOWAA Member programs.

Therefore, as a matter of policy, MOWAA opposes any measure that would place a cap on itemized deductions that would have the effect of reducing or eliminating small charitable contributions from average Americans desiring to support important social services in their communities.

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