



## 2016 PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) represents 151 Jewish Federations and over 300 independent Jewish communities across North America. JFNA's Washington office brings the Federations' voice to Capitol Hill and the White House, advocating for life-saving and humanitarian assistance in the United States and 70 other countries around the world.

### 1. Empowering older adults to age well with dignity and an enhanced quality of life:

- Safeguarding Holocaust Survivors through funding, partnerships, and supportive services.
- Accessing transportation, housing (particularly the Section 202 senior living program), support for family caregivers, and other home and community-based services to promote aging in place.
- Reauthorizing the Older Americans Act and including a preference for specialized (kosher) food.
- Creating new pathways to Baby Boomer retirement and reducing barriers to senior employment.
- Providing funding to research Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.
- Protecting the integrity of the Social Security insurance program.

### 2. Promoting the Jewish Federations' international interests:

- In coordination with the Israel Action Network, combating the assault on Israel's legitimacy and sovereignty and the Boycott-Divestment-Sanctions Movement (BDS), while promoting anti-BDS legislation at the federal and state levels.
- In coordination with JFNA's Israel Office, strengthening the US-Israel relationship and safeguarding Israel's defenses to maintain Israel's qualitative military edge in the region.
- Opposing Iran's development of a nuclear weapons capability and ensuring compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (Iran Nuclear Deal).
- Defending Jews from global anti-Semitism and protecting Jewish communities around the world.
- Supporting efforts to bring about a two-state solution with a Jewish state of Israel living in peace with a demilitarized Palestinian state.

### 3. Maximizing incentives for and supporting interests of charitable organizations:

- Protecting and opposing reductions in the charitable tax deduction.
- Safeguarding charities' financial bottom-line from new tax expenditures and regulations that reduce charitable activity, including new limitations on donor advised funds and supporting organizations, or impose the "Cadillac" healthcare tax.
- Expanding the IRA Charitable Rollover.
- Opposing new substantive limitations on the advocacy rights of 501(c)(3)s.
- Advocating for innovative initiatives that allow Federation agencies to serve at-risk clients and access public funding for nonprofit infrastructure.
- Promoting transparent Member-directed appropriations, such as Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities Supportive Service Programs and the Family Caregiver Access Network.
- Fostering greater energy efficiency by nonprofits through new competitive grants.

### 4. Protecting Medicaid, Medicare, long-term care, and the health safety net:

- Providing support to Jewish partner health agencies including nursing homes, family service agencies, assisted living facilities, and hospitals.
- Developing long-term care financing and integrated delivery solutions that foster affordability and accessibility.
- Opposing efforts to turn Medicaid into a block grant or voucher, or to cap health entitlements.
- Championing reimbursement rates that balance fairness and fiscal responsibility with additional support for home- and community-based services and home-health care.
- Promoting health information technology funding for behavioral health and long-term care.
- Fostering genetic wellness legislation and genetic anti-discrimination policies, particularly those relating to the Jewish community.
- Helping communities implement new health and long-term care laws and regulations.

## **5. Advocating with and on behalf of individuals with disabilities across the lifespan:**

- Encouraging full inclusion and physical accessibility into all aspects of Jewish life (including Federations, synagogues, schools and community centers) and in the workplace.
- Advocating for affordable and accessible transportation, housing, supportive services and respite care for caregivers.
- Supporting job training and promoting funding and policies for recruitment, hiring and retention.
- Promoting educational equality for students with disabilities and full funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- Providing adequate funding for developmental disabilities, particularly Autism Spectrum Disorders.

## **6. Safeguarding the Jewish community from terrorism and responding to disasters:**

- Maximizing funding for the Department of Homeland Security's Nonprofit Security Grant Program.
- Leading the Emergency Food and Shelter Program.
- Advocating for resources to oppose emerging threats such as cyber-attacks and active shooters.
- Promoting nonprofits into overall homeland security preparedness and response efforts.
- Leading providers to swiftly mobilize and respond to domestic disasters.

## **7. Sustaining services for the most vulnerable:**

- Modifying and balancing Sequestration (automatic spending cuts of federal programs) to protect the most vulnerable in our communities while collective national interests are preserved.
- Accessing resources to alleviate poverty for vulnerable Jews.
- Promoting mental health services including full mental health parity and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Block Grants.
- Ending food insecurity, supporting kosher food banks, and strengthening the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Protecting the Social Services, Childcare, Community Services, and Community Development Block Grants and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).
- Safeguarding the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) programs.
- Advocating for resources, programs, and protections for victims of domestic violence, human trafficking, and elder abuse.

## **8. Preserving education opportunities:**

- Creating new education tax credits.
- Safeguarding early childhood education and after-school programs.
- Supporting public education while cultivating healthy, vibrant, and affordable Jewish day schools.
- Promoting Holocaust education and remembrance.

## **9. Assisting immigrants and refugees:**

- Supporting Jews and other religious minorities fleeing persecution.
- Enhancing funding for the Office of Refugee Resettlement.
- Promoting fair and compassionate immigration reform and safeguarding the U.S. refugee program.

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