



Donor Privacy One Pager

Why is donor privacy important?

Across the country—including Connecticut—there is a growing call to force non-profit groups like the Salvation Army, NRA, Sierra Club, and even some churches, to report the names and addresses of their donors to the government. The government would post this information on a public website that anyone could see.

The reason activists want to see this private information is simple: they want to be able to target you for your personal beliefs.

Every American has the right to support causes they believe in. To keep that right a reality, we must protect individual privacy. We must protect people's ability to come together in support of their shared values.

History of donor privacy issues

During the fight for Civil Rights for African Americans, the state of Alabama tried to force the NAACP to report the names and addresses of their supporters to the government. The NAACP knew that if their membership list was made public, those people would be targeted for harassment, intimidation, and even violence. So, they fought all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and won. The Supreme Court said that donations to private organizations like the NAACP—even if they take a position on political issues—can remain private so that people's safety is protected.

These same issues still exist today. You may recall just after Thanksgiving 2015, a man went to a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs and went on a shooting rampage. He shot and tragically killed three people and wounded nine others because of his views against Planned Parenthood. If the law in Colorado required the name and addresses of all donors to that Planned Parenthood be made public, that man would have known where others who supported the organization lived in the community and the tragedy could have been much worse.

What can we do?

Every American has the right to support causes he or she believes in without fear of harassment and intimidation. We are working to educate Connecticut citizens and legislators about proposed laws in our state and protect the ability of Connecticut residents to come together in support of each other and causes they believe in.