



### **CAN's Mission**

With over 1,800 members, the California Association of Nonprofits' (CAN<sup>®</sup>) mission is to: 1) Protect, strengthen and advance the influence, accountability and effectiveness of nonprofit organizations in a manner that builds their capacity to accomplish their missions; and 2) Preserve and promote the idealism and value of nonprofit organizations in California.

### **CAN's Policy Mission**

CAN believes that nonprofit involvement in the development and implementation of public policy is at the heart of building a healthy and robust civil society. As a voice and advocate for the California nonprofit community, CAN seeks to protect, strengthen and advance the influence of nonprofit organizations and to shape public policy for the benefit of nonprofit organizations and the communities they serve.

### **Policy Networks and Advisors**

The **CAN Policy Council (CPC)**, made up of nonprofit leaders who represent various sub-sectors and geographic areas of the state, advises CAN on all aspects of its public policy work. The CPC meets quarterly to review legislation, ballot measures and regulations and to guide CAN's policy and advocacy education activities.

The **CAN Regional Partners Network**, a peer-learning community of local coalitions working together to shape policies and build advocacy capacity, connects CAN and the CPC to thousands of local nonprofit organizations. Through the Partners network, CAN is able to reach over 70 percent of California's nonprofits to exchange policy and advocacy information and learnings. The Regional Partners have a wide range of experience shaping local and regional decisions around issues such as nonprofit funding, contracting requirements and governmental oversight.

**CAN's Advisory Committee to the Attorney General** is supported and managed by CAN and includes nonprofit leaders, accountants and attorneys. They meet periodically with the Charitable Trust Division of the Attorney General's Office to explore ways to improve oversight and provide guidance to staff around nonprofit accountability and other legal issues.

### **Scope of Work**

CAN's Director of Public Policy and Legislative Advocate are located in Sacramento. They:

- Provide day-to-day review of over 3,000 legislative proposals each year
- Fight ill-conceived bills
- Promote reforms and system change in how nonprofits are involved in the development of policy and legislation
- Educate policy makers

- Inform and convene nonprofits around critical issues
- Mobilize nonprofits, particularly CAN members, to educate and inform legislators about the impact of bills on the nonprofit community and the people and communities they serve.

Through quarterly meetings and forums around the state, volunteer advisors representing all segments of the nonprofit community recommend action and outcomes that are implemented by CAN staff. This is not a project with an end point but a constant process of negotiation, education and reform to ensure that nonprofits are better able to accomplish their missions.

## **2007 Policy Agenda**

***Progress to Date: May 15, 2007***

### **1) Expand and improve health care coverage and control health care costs.**

- Developed policy paper based on member survey and held two meetings with governor's senior health care advisor.
- Our positions on guaranteed issue, maximizing use of nonprofit clinics and collaboratives and employing and training culturally competent health care providers are reflected in the governor's and legislators' proposals.

### **2) Protect nonprofit advocacy rights and prevent nonprofit advocacy abuses.**

- Supported legislation to direct ballot measure campaign committee surpluses to California's underfunded and understaffed Fair Political Practices Commission.

### **3) Create a nonprofit liaison within state government.**

- After eight years of effort with two administrations and multiple – and, thankfully, failed – legislative attempts to create an office focused on religious groups, the current governor along with First Amendment and faith-based advocates are working with us to create an Office of Community Initiatives to deal with concerns of the California nonprofit sector as a whole.

### **4) Enhance nonprofit emergency and disaster preparedness and responsiveness.**

- Supported legislation to broaden liability immunity for nonprofit responders.
- Supported legislation to require reimbursement of nonprofit responders.
- Gained seat on governor's workgroup on emergency and disaster policy.

### **5) Ensure smart oversight of nonprofit fundraising.**

- Supported legislation to fix problems with California's wine donation laws and regulation, which threatened to undermine events generating an estimated \$100 million annually.
- Advised Division of Gambling Control on implementation of new CAN-sponsored law legalizing charitable casino nights.

### **6) Streamline state grants and contracts information and administration and state nonprofit oversight.**

- Supported legislation to require all state records to be electronic by 2010.
- Supported legislation to eliminate separate approval by state tax board of nonprofits already determined to be tax-exempt by IRS.

**7) Build strong working partnership with new Attorney General Jerry Brown.**

- No progress; AG focused on restructuring AG's office, crime and environment.

**8) Increase foundation diversity.**

- In alliance with regional associations of grantmakers, slowed progress of legislation to require California's largest foundations – with assets of \$250 million or more, currently about 30 in number – to post 15 diversity indicators on the Internet.
- Negotiations underway to conduct research and create action plan to pinpoint and resolve foundation diversity issues.

**9) Strengthen nonprofit labor force.**

- Supported legislation to provide student loan payoffs in exchange for two-year commitment to paid or unpaid work in nonprofit and public sector.

**For More Information**

For more information on public policy and legislation impacting California nonprofits, please subscribe to the *CAN Policy Update*, a periodic e-newsletter informing you of the latest developments in Sacramento and nationwide. Subscribe at [www.CAnonprofits.org/resources/publications/](http://www.CAnonprofits.org/resources/publications/).

To get involved with CAN's policy work, plan to join us for Nonprofit Policy Day in Sacramento each spring. Log onto [www.CAnonprofits.org/events/nonprofitpolicyday.html](http://www.CAnonprofits.org/events/nonprofitpolicyday.html) for information on upcoming events.

If you're interested in scheduling a training to build the advocacy capacity of your organization or coalition, please contact Ken Larsen, CAN's Director of Public Policy, at [klarsen@CAnonprofits.org](mailto:klarsen@CAnonprofits.org) or (916) 402-1335.