



***Note:** The below letter was sent individually to the entire Massachusetts congressional delegation. Below is one letter.*

February 7, 2019

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
United States Senate
Room 255, Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Subject: Massachusetts Nonprofit Network Letter in Support of Ending Government Shutdowns

Dear Senator Markey:

On behalf of MNN's members, I write to ask your support of legislation that 1) funds the federal government through the end of the FY 2019 fiscal year, and 2) enacts a mechanism to prevent future shutdowns.

As background, the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network (MNN) is a statewide nonprofit association. We bring together nonprofits, funders, business leaders, and elected officials to strengthen nonprofits and raise the sector's voice on critical issues. We have more than 800 member organizations, representing nonprofits in every region of the state.

When government functions cease, the impact is felt deeply across the nation. Shutdowns place an undue burden on non-governmental sectors that step in when people who work for and rely on the federal government are left vulnerable. We encourage Congress to enact a mechanism to prompt automatic continuing resolutions that protect service organizations and workers, and prevent the harmful disruption of government shutdowns.

The historic 35-day shutdown that lasted from December 22, 2019, to January 25, 2019, marked the twenty first time that federal government funding has lapsed since 1976, when Congress enacted the modern-day budget process. While every shutdown creates disruption, the most recent lapse had significant, and likely long-lasting effects.

In January, MNN surveyed nonprofits throughout the Commonwealth to determine how the shutdown was impacting organizations and the people they serve. Responses showed that the shutdown had detrimental effects on nonprofits. The specific impacts reported include:

- increases in demand for services under existing budgetary constraints;
- disruptions in current funding streams, and little to no federal technical assistance;

- delays in anticipated grant cycles, including uncertainty around the status of grant applications and planned projects;
- lapses in federal approval needed to carry out local activities.

Nonprofits in the Commonwealth and throughout the United States are dedicated to the public good; our work improves lives, strengthens communities and the economy, and lightens the burdens of government, taxpayers, and society as a whole. During the shutdown, nonprofits stepped in to fill gaps left by suspended federal operations, and served furloughed employees newly in need of services. While Congress rightfully passed back pay for furloughed federal employees, many nonprofits did not receive any reprieve after dipping into budget reserves to meet the immediate need in their communities.

The nonprofit sector cannot withstand the impact of repeated shutdowns, and should not bear the burden when disrupted federal programming leaves millions of Americans in need of critical services. Creating a lapse in federal funding, and putting individuals and communities at risk, should not be an option in policy and budget negotiations.

Please support our communities by standing firm in support of legislation that would prevent future government shutdowns and allow nonprofits to carry out their important missions.

If you have any questions or would like additional information regarding this issue, please contact me at 617-391-9174 jklocke@massnonprofitnet.org, or Danielle Fleury, MNN Director of Government Affairs at 617-391-9175 dfleury@massnonprofitnet.org.

Sincerely,



Jim Klocke
Chief Executive Officer
Massachusetts Nonprofit Network