



## **Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania and Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia Join PAPeopleCount Campaign**

(Pittsburgh and Philadelphia - November 23, 2015) Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania (GWP) and Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia announced today that they have signed on as supporters of the PAPeopleCount campaign ([www.papeoplecount.org](http://www.papeoplecount.org)). This statewide movement, announced on November 11 by The Pittsburgh Foundation and United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania, invites Pennsylvania nonprofits, community foundations, United Ways and other funders to advocate for full funding of human services in this year's budget, as well as for permanent reforms that would protect human services providers in future budget delays.

"As co-investors in the Commonwealth's social sector, our two funder networks felt compelled to support this nonpartisan effort addressing the societal fallout of the budget impasse," says Maari Porter, Philanthropy Network's executive director. "We're speaking out in support of Pennsylvania's people, many of whose lives hang in the balance as a result of the budget delay. We urge our lawmakers to keep the most vulnerable top of mind during current negotiations and work to resolve the crisis at hand."

During the four and a half months of Pennsylvania's budget stalemate, critical services to seniors, children, the mentally ill and others in need have been compromised as hundreds of millions of dollars in county-managed human services funding has been suspended. This delay has driven many nonprofits to take out loans or lay off staff, forcing a reduction in their services and undercutting the effectiveness of their budgets. As the debate drags on, more and more organizations have had to temporarily close their doors and discontinue services altogether due to lack of funding.

"Philanthropy exists to help build a strong, resilient nonprofit sector that can effectively serve the people in our communities," explains Barbara Sieck Taylor, GWP's executive director. "Pennsylvania's budget delays have repeatedly held our most vulnerable citizens hostage, as well as the agencies that serve them. The delays impose real costs on these agencies, costs that are completely avoidable."

As the regional associations of philanthropy based in Pennsylvania's two largest cities, GWP and Philanthropy Network represent a combined membership of more than 230 philanthropic organizations across the state. Collectively, these members hold billions in charitable assets and invest hundreds of millions each year in building strong human services agencies that serve the needs of Pennsylvania's communities.

“Every dollar a nonprofit has to spend to recover from the budget delay is a dollar that could be put to much better use fulfilling that nonprofit’s mission,” Taylor says. “Philanthropy would rather see private contributions used to sustain and improve nonprofit performance than to repair government-inflicted damage.”

The philanthropic sector hopes the PAPeopleCount campaign will influence negotiators to deliver results that benefit human services nonprofits as quickly as possible, as well as spark reform of the budget process.

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**About Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania**

Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania (GWP) is western Pennsylvania’s regional association for philanthropy, formed in 1985 by leaders who wanted to create a place where grantmakers could learn and work together to increase their community impact. GWP’s mission is to promote excellence in philanthropy. Today GWP serves more than [80 members](#) in [26 counties in western Pennsylvania](#). For more information, please visit: <https://gwpa.org/>.

**About Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia**

Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia is the region’s membership association for organizations and individuals active in philanthropy. Serving primarily Philadelphia, Bucks, Montgomery, Chester and Delaware counties, plus adjacent areas, Philanthropy Network champions the role of philanthropy in improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region and educates and inspires members to do their best giving. With more than [150 members](#) representing the diversity of philanthropy in the region, we foster connections and collaborations to enhance the impact of local philanthropy and brings funders together with civic leaders, government and community organizations to address areas of mutual interest. For more information, please visit [www.philanthropynetwork.org](http://www.philanthropynetwork.org).