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Editor's Note

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This issue is all about how governments and nonprofit and civil society organizations influence each other in ways that are critical to the well-functioning of democratic societies. Governments, of course, have multiple important concerns about the nonprofit sector. They must ensure that nonprofits have the capacity to deliver the public services with which they may be entrusted. They are concerned that nonprofits promote values consistent with the public interest. They must ensure honesty and integrity associated with charitable fundraising. They can engage nonprofits constructively in the formulation of public policy or they can suppress dissent. The papers in this issue cross all of these lines of the public-nonprofit sector interface.

We begin with Erynn Beaton's important analysis of the impact of nonprofit sector density – the number of nonprofits per capita in a given jurisdiction in the U.S. The critical question is whether an increasing number of nonprofit organizations per capita necessarily limits the resources available for nonprofits to achieve their missions. In cruder terms, are there too many nonprofits? – a question often raised by governments that can control entry and exit to the sector, and philanthropic institutions that worry about how to invest their limited resources. Beaton's key finding is that nonprofit growth is not a zero sum game – i.e., that total financial resources for nonprofits increase with nonprofit density, yielding a bigger “pie” with which to address the various social missions to which nonprofits devote themselves.

In the second paper, Rafeel Wasif and Aseem Prakash address another resource question – does the receipt of funding from government affect donations to nonprofits? The context is religious schools in Pakistan where the government seeks to fund madrasas to secularize their curricula. The authors find that government funding has little effect on individual donations, although some negative impacts are identified from certain foreign government sources, including the U.S. and Saudi Arabia.

The third paper by Putnam Barber turns our attention to the regulation of charitable fund raising. Barber offers a historical review of the years 1907–1954 in the U.S., a seminal period of innovation in fundraising strategy and the

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structuring of fund raising institutions, which culminated in state statutes for registration and reporting by charities. The legacy of this period is relevant today as fundraising moves to the internet, and inconsistencies derived from state to state variations in regulation must be addressed.

The fourth paper by Mounah Abel-Samed focuses on the role civil society organizations can play in the development of public policy. The author acknowledges the common perception that governments in developing countries resist the participation of civil society organizations. In Tunisia, however, the author finds that many Tunisian legislators view these organizations as informational assets, compensating for their lack of staff resources to address important public policy concerns.

In contrast, the last paper by Ruth Simsa reveals a darker side to government's approach to civil society advocacy. Simsa examines repression of the Spanish protest movement 15M in recent years. Through interviews with participants and close observers of this movement, the author identifies the nuances of governmental repressive strategy – how government may not only control explicit protest activity overtly but how it covertly and subtly can discourage participation. As such, the author raises important concerns about the undermining of democracy in developed countries, and the tensions between freedom of speech and public order.

Finally, in our feature section, Chris Horne reviews a new book by Herrington Bryce called *Nonprofits as Policy Solutions to the Burdens of Government*. In view of the various manifestations of government-nonprofit interaction and interdependence analyzed by authors in this issue, this thoughtful and insightful book couldn't be more relevant to today's problems.

Read and enjoy, and let us know what you think.