Position Statement
Endowed Philanthropy
Adopted February 2017

Position
At a time when some are questioning the value of endowed philanthropy, the Southeastern Council of Foundations – on behalf of its members – supports laws and regulations that allow public and private philanthropy to operate in perpetuity, thereby permitting charitable organizations the ability to use endowments to generate long-term responses and support to communities.

Rationale
The Board approved this position statement at a time when some policymakers are offering proposals that threaten to undermine the power of endowed philanthropy. These proposals stand in contrast with current law, which provides strong incentives for charitable giving while ensuring that such funds are put to beneficial use.

SECF believes proposals like forced sunsetting and accelerated payout requirements could hurt charitable organizations’ ability to provide flexible, long-standing responses to pressing issues, and in turn harm communities. Therefore, it is imperative to advocate for the protection of one of philanthropy’s most useful tools.

As Congress weighs an overhaul of the tax code, SECF will advocate that any examination of the code’s charitable provisions should favor philanthropic freedom, honor donor intent, and inspire citizens to create a public legacy through philanthropy.