

A "Promise" to Make Charitable Dollars Work Harder

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Some charitable foundations which receive and grant millions of dollars of donations in California are making a public pledge to do more to benefit those who need help the most. They've agreed to allocate at least half of their grant money to causes that benefit the poor, the elderly and other groups that are struggling - and one-quarter of their dollars to end the root causes of social inequities.

For the Common Counsel Foundation of Oakland, signing the pledge fits well with what it already does, according to Larisa Casillas, the foundation's program officer. From new laws to neighborhood improvements, she says, change doesn't happen overnight.

"This work takes a lot of time - I can't stress that enough. We really need to be, as funders, dedicated and committed to an organization for the long haul."

The new pledge, called "Philanthropy's Promise," is from the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy. More than 60 charitable foundations have signed it this month, including 16 in California.

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