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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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SB630: Grant Applications and Reporting - Uniform Forms and Requirements
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
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According to the Urban Institute, 80 percent of Maryland's nonprofit grantees work with more than one agency. Many of the required forms are complex and duplicative, requiring both State employees and nonprofits to spend an inordinate amount of time on paperwork.

The Illinois legislature saw this same duplication and chose to act, passing the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) in 2014. An Illinois study prior to the enactment of GATA found that:

- There were more than 350,000 duplicated labor hours for State employees at a cost equal to or greater than \$33.7 million, and
- An estimated 250,000 labor hours costing \$15 million to grantees responding to duplicate requests.

By centralizing the application and using automation to share data across agencies, Illinois now manages grants more effectively and efficiently. Its law has become a model for other states. SB630 is based on their successful uniform application and reporting process. The bill has attracted strong, bipartisan support among my colleagues -- all 47 Senators have joined as co-sponsors. The Small Business Caucus has included this government efficiency measure among its 2020 legislative priorities.

The bill would create the Maryland Efficient Grant Application (MEGA) Council to coordinate across State agencies and develop a "Common App" (similar to those students use when applying to colleges) for prospective grantees that is shared among State agencies. This would reduce redundant administrative tasks and save taxpayers' money.

The MEGA Council membership is based on the Council on State Agency Procurement of Health, Education and Social Services and will be chaired by the Governor's Grants Office. The Council will be tasked with coordinating the various State agencies and creating the common application for grantees. SB630 would also implement the Federal Uniform Guidance, ensuring that each agency is using the same language on their applications and all relevant forms. The MEGA Council will streamline government, saving time and money for both taxpayers and nonprofits.

I urge a favorable report for SB630.