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**Delegate Dana Stein Testimony in Support of HB 1539
Grant Applications and Reporting – Uniform Forms and Requirements**

House Bill 1539, as amended, would begin a process that would reform our state’s fragmented grant procedures, with the goal of creating a standardized application and budget format. It would eliminate unnecessary paperwork for nonprofits – such as different application forms, different budget formats, and different reporting and audit requirements. These practices burden both state grant-making entities and grant recipients, and often make delivery of services and use of state funds more inefficient.

As the grant system stands now, grant applications require budget and organizational information that varies widely among state agencies, as does the financial reporting and monitoring policies. Because most service providers apply to more than one governmental funder, they must juggle all these multiple requirements.

This fragmented system consumes a grantee’s time and resources that could be used to provide additional services. Just as we are working to streamline procurement processes, streamlining the grant process would create efficiencies for non-profits and funding agencies. The lack of standardization among state agencies also hinders efficiencies that could be achieved if they were able to streamline common steps and processes and develop effective state-level tracking or accountability.

As amended, House Bill 1539 establishes a process for a new Grant Application Council and creates stakeholder workgroups that will develop a standardized application and budgetary format. It also contains a modified version of the federal Office of Management and Budget’s Uniform Guidance—which already applies to many of the federal funds flowing through the state—as a standard grants policy for state grant-making entities.

The goal of this bill is a more standardized state grants process, with recognition of the variances for different situations and programs, to reduce burdens on both grant-makers and recipients. The process will be subject to ongoing monitoring through annual reports to the General Assembly.