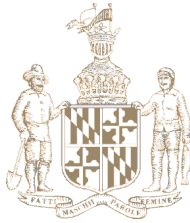


CHERYL C. KAGAN
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

—
Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and
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—
Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee
Joint Committee on Federal Relations



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SB459: MEGA Council Extension
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Wednesday, February 7, 2024: 2:00 PM

In 2020, [SB630](#) created the Maryland Efficient Grant Application (MEGA) Council to streamline nonprofit grant applications across State agencies. The Council is composed of stakeholders whose goal was to develop a “Common App” for prospective grantees. This legislation is set to expire on June 30, 2025.

The original bill attracted strong, bipartisan support— all 47 Senators joined as co-sponsors; it passed both the House of Delegates and the Senate unanimously, with recognition that nonprofits provide vital services to communities throughout the State. The Moore/Miller Administration champions the MEGA Council’s mission and aims to extend the vital work it is doing.

Despite delays caused by both the COVID-19 Pandemic and subsequent government staffing shortages, the MEGA Council has diagnosed the challenges with invoicing, recommended “Prompt Payment Parity” for nonprofits (now law!), and created common budget categories and terms. With an extended sunset expiration date, the Council will be able to recommend and implement solutions to help nonprofit grantees.

[SB459](#) would modify the Council to better help Maryland’s nonprofits by:

- Extending the expiration date to July 1, 2028;
- Adding the Comptroller (or their designee) to the Council;
- Studying the creation of a State Grants Ombudsman, with a report due July 1, 2025;
- Mandating the submission of annual progress reports to the General Assembly through the Council’s expiration; and
- Requiring an additional report of the Council’s recommendations by July 1, 2027.

Comptroller Lierman supports the addition of a representative from her Office to the Council.

A State Grants Ombudsperson would be a “one-stop shop” on troubleshooting, sharing information on grant opportunities, and enhancing the operations of nonprofits.

Let’s pass the bill to create improvements and provide for more efficient management of nonprofit grants.

I have requested an amendment in collaboration with the Governor’s Office to no longer add the Legislative Auditor to the Council and allow the Governor to appoint the Council Chair.

I urge a favorable report on SB459 as amended.