



SB 365

Department of Commerce – Nonprofit Organizations Navigator – Established

Hearing before the Senate Finance Committee

Feb. 13, 2025

POSITION: Favorable

Community Law Center (CLC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which is a legal partner to Maryland neighborhoods and nonprofits in pursuit of more just and vibrant communities. CLC provides direct legal representation to communities and nonprofits on issues like tax exemption and organizational governance, real estate, contracts, intellectual property, employment law, and more. We advocate on issues that impact our Maryland neighborhood and nonprofit clients, including to reform the tax sale system and to prevent and remediate property vacancy and abandonment.

CLC supports SB 365 in creating a Nonprofit Organizations Navigator to provide technical assistance to nonprofits, support nonprofits in applying for state grant programs, and provide information to nonprofits on grant opportunities.

Our nonprofit organization clients would benefit significantly from a centralized state organization that can provide information on grant opportunities. Many of our clients are small, grassroots nonprofit organizations run by volunteers that are working hard to address problems and provide support in their communities. They are always looking for resources and funding opportunities to make their work possible and to grow and expand. Having a Nonprofit Organizations Navigator would help these organizations find resources they might not otherwise have access to, and help them achieve their missions that strengthen Maryland communities and support our residents.

For nonprofits that receive grants through Maryland state programs, SB 365 would assist when these organizations encounter delays and issues with state grant making. CLC itself as a nonprofit organization would benefit from this assistance – like many other Maryland nonprofits, CLC relies on funding from the state of Maryland to support our programming and provide assistance to communities and nonprofit organizations. We are currently working to resolve a technical issue related to a state grant involving DocuSign, and having a Nonprofit Organizations Navigator within the Department of Commerce would be a welcome resource to turn to in resolving this purely technical issue with receiving a grant disbursement so that we can continue to provide legal services to our clients.

We urge a favorable report on SB 365. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

For the above reasons,

CLC urges a FAVORABLE VOTE ON SB 365.

Please contact Shana Roth-Gormley, Staff Attorney at Community Law Center, with any questions.

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