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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
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SB365: Nonprofit Navigator
Senate Finance Committee
Thursday, February 13, 2025 1:00 PM

The nonprofit sector accounts for 13% of Maryland’s workforce. There are more than 40,000 organizations that provide food, shelter, and safety to our communities. This sector is disproportionately affected by these turbulent times. [SB365](#) would offer a reasonable modicum of assistance by employing ONE PERSON to ensure nonprofits have the support they need to continue serving our communities effectively.

Preliminary research from Maryland Nonprofits has identified at least 18 “Ombudsmen” positions across State government, serving in the Departments of Aging, Education, Human Services, Transportation, and elsewhere. These employees advocate and provide support in various areas of government.

The “Nonprofit Navigator” position created by this bill could:

- Help nonprofits understand and access federal, State, and local grant programs;
- Resolve delays in grant funding, making sure that State dollars reach their intended use more efficiently (without legislation like our 2023 Prompt Payment Parity Law);
- Represent nonprofit interests across State agencies, ensuring that policies and programs neither undermine nor overlook the sector; and
- Manage the Nonprofit, Interest-Free, Micro Bridge Loan Account (NIMBL) program.

The Department of Commerce already employs a Director of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Outreach; the proposed Nonprofit Navigator simply would do the same for 501(c)(3)s. The Navigator would also enhance the nonprofit perspective on the Maryland Efficient Grant Application (M.E.G.A.) Council.

The low cost of this singular position would repay itself many times over by boosting nonprofit organizations’ effectiveness; aid in troubleshooting; and access to funds and resources in order to serve the needs of Maryland and its residents.

There is an amendment to make this emergency legislation, with the position starting no later than July 1, 2025.

Nonprofits are our vital partners, weaving our safety net and enhancing the quality of life for our residents. We prioritize this partnership through our myriad grant programs-- and this funding will only become more important with the cuts and chaos wrought by the Trump administration.

Let's supercharge our ability to get services to our communities through our nonprofit partners!

I urge a favorable report on SB365 as amended.