



February 13, 2025

Senate Bill 365 - Department of Commerce – Nonprofit Organizations Navigator – Established

Senate Finance Committee

Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth (MARFY) is an association of private child caring organizations providing foster care, group homes, and other services through more than 200 programs across Maryland. The members of MARFY represent providers who serve Maryland's most vulnerable children who are in out of home placements due to abuse, neglect or severe mental health, and medical needs. We operate group homes, treatment foster care programs and independent living programs, primarily serving the adoptive and foster care population as well as a juvenile services population.

We strongly support Senate Bill 365, legislation that will significantly enhance the ability of nonprofit organizations to serve communities across Maryland by streamlining access to vital state grants and funding opportunities. As many of our members are nonprofits, we urge the General Assembly to pass this critical legislation to ensure that charitable organizations can continue their essential work with efficiency and effectiveness.

Nonprofit organizations are the lifeblood of our communities, providing services ranging from child welfare services to housing assistance and food security to healthcare, education, and workforce development. Despite their importance, many nonprofits struggle with cumbersome and inefficient grant application processes, which hinder their ability to secure funding and allocate resources where they are most needed.

By establishing the Nonprofit Organizations Navigator, this bill will provide nonprofits with technical assistance to navigate complex grant processes, reducing administrative burdens and allowing them to focus on service delivery. Additionally, many smaller nonprofits, particularly those serving marginalized and low-income communities, lack the staffing and expertise to effectively apply for state grants. The navigator's role in offering guidance and sharing funding opportunities will level the playing field for these vital organizations.

Lastly, Senate Bill 365 supports economic growth and community stability. Nonprofits are not just service providers—they are economic drivers, employing thousands of Marylanders and contributing to the state's overall economic well-being. Ensuring they have access to the necessary funding will bolster community resilience and maintain essential social services.

Senate Bill 365 is not just a policy improvement—it is a lifeline for the nonprofit sector and the countless individuals and families who rely on their services. By passing this bill, Maryland will demonstrate its commitment to supporting nonprofits, strengthening community partnerships, and fostering an equitable grant distribution system.

We respectfully urge you to support Senate Bill 365 and ensure its passage into law. Thank you for your time and consideration.

For more information call or email:

Therese M. Hessler | 301-503-2576 | therese@ashlargr.com