



HB 15 - Public Information Act - Public Records - Nonprofit Organizations

House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

February 10, 2026

OPPOSE

Chair Wells, Vice-Chair, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition of HB 15. This bill would subject non-profits that receive over \$50,000 annually to the Public Information Act, effectively treating them as state agencies.

The CASH Campaign of Maryland promotes economic advancement for low-to-moderate income individuals and families in Baltimore and across Maryland. CASH accomplishes its mission through operating a portfolio of direct service programs, building organizational and field capacity, and leading policy and advocacy initiatives to strengthen family economic stability. CASH and its partners across the state achieve this by providing free tax preparation services through the IRS program 'VITA', offering free financial education and coaching, and engaging in policy research and advocacy. **Almost 4,000 of CASH's tax preparation clients earn less than \$10,000 annually. More than half earn less than \$20,000.**

Like many non-profits across the state, CASH partners with the state to fill critical service gaps and deliver programs efficiently and effectively in communities with the greatest need. Every year through our free tax preparation services, CASH files an average of 16,000 tax returns and helps taxpayers receive an average of \$27 million in tax refunds and credits.

While the intent of HB 15 appears to be increasing transparency, nonprofit organizations are already subject to significant public accountability. All tax-exempt nonprofits must file IRS Form 990 annually, which is publicly available and provides detailed information on an organization's finances, governance, executive compensation, conflicts of interest, and operations. This level of disclosure exceeds what is required of many for-profit government contractors and already ensures transparency regarding the use of funds and organizational oversight. Also, CASH and many other non-profits release public documents, such as infographics, that show their impact.

In addition, state grant agreements already include robust reporting, auditing, and compliance requirements to ensure the appropriate use of public dollars. Many grants are reimbursable for contracts that require documented performance before funds are disbursed. HB 15 would therefore create duplicative and unnecessary administrative burdens without meaningfully increasing accountability.

Expanding PIA requirements to nonprofits would likely deter smaller, community-based organizations from partnering with the state. Many nonprofits already operate with limited administrative capacity and receive state funding that does not fully cover overhead costs. Imposing additional compliance requirements risks reducing the number of available service providers, increasing costs to the state, or diminishing services for Maryland residents who rely on these programs.

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Thus, we encourage you to return an unfavorable report for HB 15.

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