



Brigid Howe (Executive Director, Nonprofit Montgomery) Testimony - Favorable

SB69: Removing Nonprofit Navigator Sunset

Nonprofit Montgomery is an alliance of nonprofits that serve the residents of Montgomery County, Maryland. We provide capacity-building, peer-to-peer networking, and advocacy for the sector.

Montgomery County is home to over 7,000 nonprofits that provide services Marylanders rely on for food, housing assistance, legal advice, literacy, mental health programs, and community enrichment activities. Nonprofits are essential to the county and state economy, as employers and businesses, and also provide incalculable benefits to residents who use their essential services.

In 2025, the legislature passed [SB365](#), which established the first-in-the-nation "Nonprofit Navigator" within the Department of Commerce. The Navigator has already proven to be an excellent resource for State nonprofits, helping them access information and connect to government and private sector resources. In fact, Nonprofit Montgomery was delighted to welcome Jessica Doiron, the current Navigator, as a resource to Montgomery County nonprofits in a town hall-style webinar and as an exhibitor in our second annual Tools to Thrive Expo, which shared resources with over 100 attendees.

The services provided by the Navigator are essential to nonprofit sustainability. These include hands-on assistance with State grant applications, resolving roadblocks like payment delays, and hands-on support to search for external funding opportunities. The Navigator also serves on the Maryland Efficient Grant Application (MEGA) Council, helping to reduce administrative burdens and redundancies in grant procedures.

The Navigator also publishes a monthly newsletter. This is a free resource offering timely, valuable information and direct assistance for grantseekers. Nonprofit Montgomery has shared valuable content from the newsletter with our members and encouraged them to contact Ms. Doiron and utilize resources she promotes.

As federal programs have been cut or eliminated, it is critical that nonprofits receive the support they need to identify grant opportunities and secure funding. Maryland's Nonprofit Navigator provides this essential service.

Last year, an amendment created a 2-year sunset for the Navigator position. This means that the Navigator is a contractual position **without benefits** that would terminate next year. This bill simply removes the sunset, ensuring valuable continuity.

The fiscal note indicates there is no fiscal effect in the coming year because the current contract is funded through the end of FY2027. There will be minimal effect in FY2028 and beyond from converting it to a regular position.

Nonprofit Montgomery urges a favorable report.