



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF WESTERN LANE COUNTY

P.O. Box 739 Florence, OR 97439
541-902-0304

March 1, 2023

Senate Human Services Committee
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

Dear Committee Members:

RE: SB 606 - Oregon Nonprofit Modernization Act

The Boys & Girls Club of Western Lane County asks you to pass SB 606, the Oregon Nonprofit Modernization Act. Your support is critical to the health of the nonprofit sector and the communities they serve.

Our mission is to inspire and enable all youth, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens by providing stimulating and challenging programs through interaction with dedicated, caring people. With our mission at the core of the work we do, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Western Lane County provides support, love and guidance for all our members focusing on the whole person. We are taking a holistic approach to care for and meet the needs of over 250 youth in both academic and non-academic life skills.

Our staff are continually adjusting the sails with the changing winds to ensure that we remain on course, knowing that our final destination is to enrich the lives of the youth we serve and helping them to become the very best version of themselves.

The teams provide fun enriching activities that include cooking, theater, gardening, and (STEAM) Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math experiences and volunteerism. These activities offer youth alternative ways of learning, exploring new interests, providing opportunities for students to engage and thrive in a non-school setting, and to support others in their community.

Our summer finale for youth ages 12-18 is an innovative aviation experience, the Florence Air Academy. This will expose our members to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) through aeronautic activities and hands-on projects inspired by volunteers with highlights of guest speakers, ground school and crash tower training, and flight experiences. The project helps youth link direct pathways to future careers with higher education and technical learning.

One of the largest barriers that we face is not being recognized as priority community partners caring for the youth in our communities because we don't fall under school programs or licensed care programs eliminating us from substantial funding opportunities. I would contend that our clubs have some of the biggest impacts on the youth we serve and without our presence in our communities our youth would suffer greatly.

Another major challenge is that we are completely funded through fundraising and grants efforts. Most grants that we are currently funded have strict requirements on how the funding can be used and do not take into account the cost of implementing the programs. They leave out or provide little support for expenses for wages, taxes and benefits that are the primary cost of running our facilities. We work tirelessly on fundraisers to generate enough revenue to cover the cost of operations to ensure we can

keep the doors of our Clubs open year after year. Living in a small rural community this can be very challenging with so many non-profits vying for the same dollars.

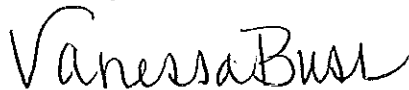
The Nonprofit Modernization Act would have the greatest impact for our Club and community by providing us with a more sustainable model to ensure our doors stay open for the most vulnerable population we serve, giving them a hand up as they continue to grow into their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens.

- Creating the Nonprofit Workforce Retention Fund to provide grants to nonprofits to help maintain and prevent employee turnover.
- Creating a state task force to reform nonprofit contracting in order to streamline and simplify the process, raise wages, and create an ecosystem of administrative policies, statutes and funding levels that lead to sustainable government/nonprofit partnerships.

The Boys & Girls Club of Western Lane County appreciates your consideration of SB 606. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vanessa Buss".

Vanessa Buss, CEO
Boys & Girls Clubs of Western Lane County
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541-991-0478