

MAXINE E. DEXTER, MD
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

DISTRICT 33



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

To: Members of the House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Date: March 28, 2023

Subject: Support HB 2892

Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Lewis and Tran, and members of the committee:

For the record, my name is Dr. Maxine Dexter and I am honored to be the State Representative for House District 33, which includes NW & Downtown Portland, Linnton, and Cathedral Park. I respectfully submit this testimony in support of HB 2892, which will create a prequalification program for nonprofits to more efficiently apply for state funding.

At its core, HB 2892 is about ensuring our state can support programs run by Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) efficiently and effectively by reducing administrative work for the state and these nonprofits tasked with executing state contracts. While we have a strong panel of representatives for nonprofits speaking today, I will briefly touch on *what* the bill does.

HB 2892 creates a process through which trusted nonprofits can prequalify for state grants. This idea was brought to me by Scott Kerman, the Executive Director at Blanchet House in Old Town Portland. He referred to it as a "TSA PreCheck for non-profits". The state requires significant reporting and accountability from CBOs receiving state funding and the idea was that once you have established credibility with the state and a history of capable compliance with the accountability processes, that CBOs could decrease significant administrative time if they could avoid redundant paperwork and administrative costs when applying for future funding.

After discussions with agency leaders, especially Meliah Masiba at the Department of Administrative Services, it became clear that the bill as currently written won't successfully accomplish this goal. After further discussion with Meliah who will also speak today, it is my hope that we move this bill to the Rules Committee to provide more time to work with agency and CBO partners to optimize this policy. There is also a -1 amendment available for you to review which was the result of initial feedback from the Nonprofit Association who will also speak today.

To be clear, the bill is not intended to prioritize those organizations who are able to receive prequalification, but just reduces the administrative load on the CBOs and the state should they be awarded funding after being "pre-checked". To continue the analogy, all nonprofits will get on the plane at the same time, some will just go through security faster.

HB 2892 also intends to create an opportunity for more flexible funding for “pre-checked” organizations – how this could be implemented will be a topic of further conversation prior to the bill being ready for committee approval.

I would like to thank Scott Kerman with Blanchet House for bringing this concept to my attention, and Phillip Kennedy-Wong with the Nonprofits Association for picking up this bill and running with it. I believe that HB 2892 will help the state streamline grant funding procedures, more quickly getting needed funding put to use. Please join me in supporting HB 2892.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maxine Dexter', written in a cursive style.

Representative Maxine Dexter, M.D.
House District 33 (NW & Downtown Portland, Linnton, & Cathedral Park)