



April 7, 2023

To the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

My name is Janet Yousey. I have the privilege of serving as CEO at Shangri-La. We support people with disabilities and families with disadvantages - at home, at work, and in the community. We serve approximately 1,000 people per year and employ 350 staff. I see Senate Bill 606 as a starting point to elevating the work of nonprofit organizations and valuing the work nonprofits do in our community.

But first, let me start with gratitude. I am genuinely thankful to do the work I do, with the Shangri-La team, alongside people with disabilities and families with disadvantages in our community. I am grateful to see conversations happening to support nonprofits, specifically through SB 606. And it is so cool to be part of this conversation!

Let me get to my point. I think we can significantly improve the relationship between nonprofits and government. I have worked in this industry for ten years and in that time, I have personally witnessed how red tape, missed deadlines and vague grant spending guidelines have had negative impacts on real people. At Shangri-La this has caused us to:

- Delay the start of a new mental health home by over 6-months due to shifting government timelines.
- Lose a house we were under contract with due a delay in government funds making it to us.
- Avoid opening badly needed additional houseless assistance programs because the government contract doesn't adequately cover true program expenses.
- Manage spreadsheets upon spreadsheets, general ledger details hundreds of pages long, receipts by the bucketload, to track the various requirements of each grant. I am thankful for these grants, but the administrative work currently called for by both parties is extensive and perhaps unnecessary given the other methods of checks and balances already in place. For example, our services are audited and licensed, our financials are audited and publicly shared. We are held accountable for the quality of services we provide.

Now look, I'm not saying that we have been perfect in any given situation either...we just opened a Residential Treatment Home later than our original timeline because remodeling took longer than anticipated. What I am saying is the framework within which we are asked to work needs examination. I believe SB 606 opens the door for badly needed conversations.

Thank you for your time.

Janet Yousey, CEO

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