



April 8, 2023

Co-Chair Steiner, Co-Chair Sanchez, and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Re: Senate Bill 5506 – Support, Funding Appropriations for 2023-2025 Biennium

Co-Chair Steiner, Co-Chair Sanchez, and Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is William Miller (Blackfeet/ Cherokee), and I have the honor of serving as the Government Affairs Manager for the Native American Youth & Family Center (NAYA) and the Executive Director of the NAYA Action Fund located in Portland. I testify in support of NAYA’s capital construction request of \$1.15M to address urgent health and safety concerns on our campus and the importance of supporting and funding Senate Bill 606 – the Nonprofit Modernization Act.

I grew up running through the halls of the NAYA, and now, I walk those same halls as a professional serving the Native community. I learned how to bead, drum, and grass dance through cultural programming growing up. As a NAYA youth, my family suffered a tragedy in June 2006 when my father died suddenly from an accidental opioid overdose. A year later, my brother was shot and killed over a drug deal not too far from here. I share my story because the one lifeline my family had through all this was NAYA. Despite these significant life challenges, NAYA was always there to catch us when we fell. We received support like rental assistance, energy assistance, mentorship opportunities, and afterschool programming.

I can speak for many when I say that an investment in NAYA is an investment in youth and families just like mine. You won’t only be investing in making critical upgrades to the campus; you’re also investing to ensure the NAYA remains standing for seven generations to come, continuing to serve the Native community.

We wouldn’t be who we are without the incredible staff we have. However, many nonprofit organizations experience high employee turnover rates, leading to additional administrative and organizational burdens. The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare how much we depend on community-based organizations to meet the state's goals and support the community in need. Despite our ability to mobilize resources quickly, across the board we have infrastructure needs and



sustainability problems the legislature cannot ignore. We ask for your support of Senate Bill 606, the Nonprofit Modernization Act, which would create a Nonprofit Workforce Retention Fund to increase the compensation of staff and reduce turnover and establish a Task Force on Modernizing Grant Funding and Contracting to study the state's granting and public procurement practices concerning the wages of employees of nonprofit organizations, among others. We thank you for your time and attention to these requests.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. Miller", is positioned above the printed name.

William Miller  
Executive Director