



To: All legislators who have Latino Network programs and services in their district

Re: Support SB 602

Date: 4/3/2025

Latino Network was founded in 1996 by advocates for the needs of the growing Latinx community in Multnomah County. Since then, these grassroots beginnings have evolved into a continuum of services that support Latinx individuals, families, and communities. Our programs currently focus on education, advocacy & leadership, health & wellness, economic justice, youth empowerment & violence prevention, and arts & culture, engaging nearly 11,000 community members throughout Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties in the last year. We are the leading culturally-specific provider for Latinx youth, parent, and family services in the Portland area with the goal of serving the nearly 19% of Oregon's population who identify as Latinx or Hispanic.

Latino Network currently provides direct services to youth and families in Senate Districts 13-15 and 19-25 and House Districts 25, 26, 28, 29, 37, 40 and 42-50.

We support SB 602 because we need to improve our contracting and grant making systems in order to ensure that the money we are putting into our communities can solve the problems they are intended to solve. Governments and nonprofit organizations work together on a wide range of community needs, these partnerships also experience a wide range of complication and success. Successful and stable partnerships are built on mutual understanding of what it takes to do the work, how success can be tracked and what it takes to nurture the program or services over time.

In 2023, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 606 to create a task force to address recognized problems in government grantmaking and contracting that impact livable wages for nonprofit employees; and to recommend administrative, structural, and procedural improvements. I had the honor of serving on the SB 606 Task Force on Modernizing Grants and Contracts and learned so much from state agencies on the things they are doing to nurture the success and stability of their initiatives and partnerships. The task force made many recommendations based on the feedback and knowledge gathering we engaged in with the state agencies. Nothing in SB 602 is new, every recommendation from the task force and each proposed change in SB 606 is a promising practice that is currently being implemented by at least one state agency. This is our opportunity to take these promising practices and make them the rule rather than the exception.



We are seeing major constraints in local and state budgets this year that will result in fewer services to community members for the next several years impacting everything from youth and family, recovery support, housing and anti-poverty programs, arts & culture, and elder care. With fewer dollars invested in community based services, we need the dollars that are invested to be used to their maximum benefit. Now is the time to do away with old habits that have led to disjointed application processes, restrictive contracts, incommensurate reporting requirements, delayed payments, reimbursement-based grants, low administrative rates, and lack of cost-of-living adjustments that have hindered nonprofits' partnership with the government.

Senate Bill 602 offers a comprehensive approach to addressing long-running deficiencies in grantmaking and contracting with community partners. Enacting all the recommendations will maximize the overall benefits to Oregonians.

Please vote Yes SB 602!