



April 4, 2025

Senate Committee on Rules
900 Court Street NE
Salem Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Jama, Vice Chair Bonham and Committee Members,

RE: Senate Bill 602 - Task Force on Modernizing Nonprofit Grant Funding and Contracting Recommendations -**Support**

Options Counseling and Family Services joins with Oregon's nonprofits to ask you to support the [recommendations of the state Task Force on Modernizing Grant Funding and Contracting](#) by passing Senate Bill 602. The recommendations are designed to improve the process and outcomes of government grants and contracts by empowering nonprofits to deliver critical services efficiently to Oregonians, while also providing adequate financial support.

Options Counseling and Family Services provides mental health and family stabilization services in fourteen Oregon counties throughout Western Oregon. I've worked at Options for over thirty years, starting as a direct service provider for families referred through ODHS/Child Welfare.

Options has expanded its geographical reach and service array and currently offers services to caregivers referred through ODHS/Self Sufficiency. The agency has contracts with ODHS/Child Welfare support to youth aging out of foster care, evidence-based groups for resource parents, navigation services to assist families access mental health, dental, vision, and primary care services. Our focus is on *preventing* out-of-home placements by offering timely, effective, home- and community based services. In addition, Options provides effective mental health and psychiatry interventions to Oregon Health Plan members.

Options has experienced redundancy in the procurement process, for example, drafting eleven separate proposals, one for each district or county, for the same contract. In addition, Options has multi-year contracts with the Oregon Department of Human Services that do not include any cost-of-living increases. As a result, it is difficult to offer competitive wages and benefits to the individuals who are serving some of Oregon's most vulnerable children, youth, adults, and

families. Finally, there are often onerous reporting and administrative costs, which are required, but are not covered by the contract payments.

Senate Bill 602, if enacted, improves and streamlines how government grants and contracts are structured and administered. The Bill would make important changes such as providing upfront financial support to cover the costs associated with recruiting staff and developing a new service. Senate Bill 602 also requires prompt, reliable payments for services rendered.

I hope to count on your leadership in guiding the passage of Senate Bill 602. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Kelli McKnight, CEO
Options Counseling and Family Services