



Dear Senators Frederick, Pham, Taylor, Jama, and Gorsek, and Representatives Nelson, Sanchez, Tran, Noose, Valderrama, Hudson, and Ruiz,

Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI) is writing to each of you because you are all Senators and Representatives in the footprint of the work that we do at SEI to serve our community with excellence. SEI provides a wide variety of culturally specific services in multiple spaces, including but not limited to, youth mentorship, education, housing, family advocacy and reunification, crisis intervention, anti-poverty, adult and parent education, early childhood development, and economic empowerment and career development. In serving our community SEI enters into partnership with multiple government entities, including the State of Oregon.

As a collaborative partner with our state, and each of you, SEI would like to express our strong support for SB 602.

We at SEI join 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 and cost effectively to Oregonians.

SEI has experienced each of the following in our experience as a contracted partner:

- payment delays,
- insufficient admin funding,
- insufficient and poorly calculated funding to cover true costs for our work,
- the reality of opening a credit line for over 1 million dollars to cover costs prior to reimbursement for services rendered,
- wage suppression and non-existent COLAs to adequately compensate staff,
- and most significantly, dismissive attitudes and practices that do not value us as an equitable partner in the work that we do.

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:

- encouraging accurate cost estimates for ongoing non-profit grants and/or contracts in the budget development process to inform budget and funding decisions made by the executive and legislative branches,
- requiring state agencies to track rates of on-time payments,
- encouraging state agencies to make advance payments for grant funds equivalent to 25% of the annual contract value to ensure non-profits are not having to front this funding prior to payment,
- and encouraging COLA adjustments for contracts that exceed 12 months.



These are just some of the contract improvements that would be enacted. And each of these steps brings us closer to the level of equitable partnership that is required to maximize the impact of the work that we all want to see done successfully.

To review all of the task force's findings and recommendations, we encourage you to read the [full report](#).

The residents of Oregon deserve our very best. We all want to deliver our very best. SEI specifically serves the African American community in Multnomah County, and our people rely on SEI to serve our community with excellence. As willing partners with all of our local governments, SEI wants to work with each of you to ensure that we deliver on our promises and that we are representing the excellence that our community needs, expects, and deserves.

SB 602 maximizes our ability to effectively work together to live up to the promises we make to our people.

We hope that we can count on your leadership in guiding the passage of Senate Bill 602. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Trent Aldridge
CEO
Self Enhancement, Inc.