



# PROJECT ACCESS NOW

March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023

Dear Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Robinson, and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

I'm writing to you today representing the 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization Project Access NOW. We have operated in Oregon for more than 15 years, successfully partnering with many state, county, and city agencies to conduct our work. As a community-based organization providing access to health care and health-related resources for un- and under- insured communities, it is vital that our processes are as efficient as possible so our resources and energy can be focused on serving the community.

While we truly value the support government agencies have given us, these grants fail to adequately reimburse the organization for the true costs of the programs being funded and required deliverables. Indirect/Administrative costs, for example, are typically capped at 10%, which is an unrealistically small sum for even the most efficient nonprofit. This typically means that accepting these grants is financially disadvantageous, and this leads many nonprofits to become financially unstable. Most importantly, this jeopardizes the essential work that the government is aiming to fund.

Additionally, the government contracts that we've received often fail to adequately adjust for increases in costs over time. When government contracts fail to provide annual increases to account for inflation and cost of living increases, this puts nonprofits in a position of having to either cut real wages for staff (by freezing nominal wages) or provide cost of living raises for staff despite the absence of funding to offset them. Either decision is likely to result in short- and long-term harm to the nonprofit, its staff, and the clients served by an organization.

We were extremely pleased to see the nonprofit employee retention component included in the proposed bill. Despite our efforts to make our workplace healthy and effective, employee turnover is always a struggle, and this has worsened with the recent pandemic-related economic downturn. When an employee leaves, there is often a significant gap of time before that position can be filled and that person can be trained to effectively perform the duties of the job. When we don't have enough workers, we can't deliver on the grants we receive, nor can we help the community. **We encourage you to support SB 606 to modernize how non-profits are supported systematically. This is essential legislation for all Oregonians.**

Kindly,  
Carly Hood-Ronick MPA, MPH

Chief Executive Officer  
Project Access NOW

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