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Communicating the Why, the How, and the What

Advancing policy goals requires clear communications that answer the key questions of “why” the issue matters, “how” the proposed solution is effective, and “what” interested people can and should do to get involved. Recently, Jim White, Executive Director of the **Nonprofit Association of Oregon** (NAO), answered all three questions. In one paragraph!

Jim accomplished this amazing feat in an article titled “Systems Change” published in the nonprofit state association’s member newsletter, [NAO Update](#). He wrote (and we’re reformatting to make our points):

- **[Why it Matters]** Do I wish that the government provided a larger safety net for our communities so there isn’t so much pressure on nonprofits to do the work of the public sector? Absolutely. However, until we can make these structural changes permanent, we need to take steps to make doing our work easier, more efficient and more effective.
- **[How it Helps]** One of the ways NAO is working on creating systems change is through [S.B. 606](#). In the simplest terms, the goal of SB 606 is to create structure that improves the partnership between nonprofits and government in order to best serve our communities while taking care of our employees.

- **[What You Can Do]** We want as many nonprofits as possible involved in this effort – we encourage you to sign on to our [letter of support](#) by filling out [this form](#). We also have a [full advocacy toolkit](#) around S.B. 606 that includes a social media toolkit, a suggestion box, link to our contracting survey, and more. This toolkit is regularly updated so I hope you bookmark the page and visit it often for more ways to participate with us in this effort.

For more than a decade, [data have shown](#) that government systems for grantmaking and contracting with charitable nonprofits are woefully inadequate. The outdated “systems” that NAO is seeking to change have multiple flaws that hurt nonprofits and taxpayers alike. The legislation NAO is promoting, combines specific proposed fixes regarding extremely late payments and indirect costs and calls for ongoing dialogue between nonprofits and governments to ensure organizations’ work can be “easier, more efficient and more effective.”