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Meeting Date:

03/19/2026 Upon Adjournment

Hearing Item :

HB26-1274

Export to Excel or Word

Export to Excel

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Dear Members of the House Finance Committee:

On behalf of Rose Community Foundation, I write to express our strong support for House Bill 26-1274 and respectfully encourage members of the committee to vote in favor.

As a community foundation representing and investing in the seven-county Greater Denver region, we work closely with hundreds of nonprofits that are on the ground serving individuals and communities furthest from opportunity. These nonprofits are essential partners to the State of Colorado, with many working alongside state departments and agencies to deliver critical programs and services to residents.

However, the current way the state makes grants to its nonprofit partners is creating unintended consequences for organizations and the people they serve. Unlike foundations, Colorado's state grantmaking process is largely reimbursement based, meaning nonprofits are required to complete the activities for which the state agency awarded the grant before applying for the reimbursement of costs incurred in completing the project. At that point, the nonprofit must submit a correct legal notice of the state's liability, which only then initiates a 45-day period during which the agency must pay the organization for the already completed work.

The reimbursement-based system represents one of the top financial challenges many nonprofits face. The lag between incurring expenses related to executing the grant contract – such as grant-related investments in staff time, rent, and materials – and getting paid by the state can last months, depending on reimbursement rules, agency delays, and the complexity of the grant. In the face of reimbursement delays, many organizations are forced to take out bridge loans to maintain services, tap limited reserves to cover payroll, and delay or reduce program delivery. As a result, many nonprofits – especially smaller ones – either cannot or are unwilling to apply for state grants, even in instances where they may be best suited to do the work that the state is funding. These cash flow concerns often supersede the opportunity for increased funding or service expansion.

Take it from a professional grant maker: this is not a strategic way to fund projects you want to see succeed. There is a reason that foundations across Colorado pay nonprofits in full, up front when we make grants.

By offering greater flexibility in how grants are administered, HB26-1274 would help more nonprofits partner with the state and strengthen the delivery of services to communities across Colorado. Rose Community Foundation proudly joins our partners in the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors in supporting this important bill that will improve outcomes from the State of Colorado's investments.

Ray Barrie-Kivel
Director of Policy and Advocacy, Rose Community Foundation