



Joint Hearing of the California Assembly and Senate Select Committees on the Nonprofit Sector

Advancing Institutional Support of Nonprofits to Address Unprecedented Challenges and Threats Facing the Sector

August 19th, 2025
3:30 – 5:00 pm in Senate Room 1200

The Select Committees provide leadership on behalf of the nonprofit sector and help to inform legislators about the critical role nonprofits play in communities across the state.

I. Opening Remarks

II. Panel 1: Unprecedented Challenges and Threats Facing the Sector in 2025

- **The Impact of Federal Funding Cuts and New Tax Policy on California Nonprofits**
Early into the tenure of a new federal administration, funding cuts are significantly impacting nonprofit organizations, forcing many to reduce staffing and programs. These cuts, stemming from executive orders and proposed budget cuts, have created a climate of uncertainty and instability. Several recent proposals and potential changes in tax policy could also significantly reduce funding for nonprofits.
Speakers: Laura Seaman, CEO, League of California Community Foundations; Monica White, CEO, Food Share of Ventura County
- **Wildfire Recovery: Supporting the Role of Nonprofits in Disaster and Emergency Mitigation**
Nonprofits across California have actively assisted with relief and recovery efforts in the wake of wildfires, providing a range of services from immediate aid to long-term support. Panelists will discuss how the state can support the unique role nonprofits play when environmental challenges impact communities.
Speakers: Abby Browning, Chief of Private Sector & NGO Coordination Office, Governor's Office of Emergency Services; Bruce Yerman, Director of Operations, Camp Fire Collaborative

III. Panel 2: Advancing Solutions and New Institutional Support for Nonprofits

- **Establishing a Voice of, by, and for Nonprofits in State Government: Office of Nonprofit Empowerment**
Across California state government, there is no centralized governing body to encourage innovation, systematic coordination, and alignment across state entities that have regular touchpoints with nonprofits (in the way that there is for small businesses, for example). Panelists will discuss creating a formal bridge between government and the nonprofit sector.
Speaker: Geoff Green, CEO, CalNonprofits

- **Equity in Contracting: Reforms to Support Accessing and Managing State Resources**
Statewide, nonprofits continue to face significant barriers and inefficiencies in implementing programs via contracts and grants, thereby hindering their ability to grow and scale important services, particularly in underserved communities across the state. Panelists will discuss the need for greater streamlining in contracting practices, increased access to grant opportunities, and fairer cost structures and payment requirements, including via legislative solutions.
Speakers: Annie Chang, Vice President, Nonprofit Finance Fund; Wilfredo Cruz Jr., Executive Director, Community Resource Project

IV. Public Comment

V. Closing Remarks

Panelist Biographies

Laura Seaman
Chief Executive Officer

League of California Community Foundations

Laura Seaman is CEO of the League of California Community Foundations, a statewide association of community foundations collectively serving over 99% of the population of California. Prior to joining the League, she served as Associate Director of the Digital Civil Society Lab at the Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society. She has also worked at the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment, the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, The Asia Foundation, and the UC Davis Community Service Office.

Monica White
President and CEO

Food Share of Ventura County

Monica White joined Food Share of Ventura County as President and CEO in 2017. Having previously served on the Food Share board, Monica's nomination to lead the non-profit that feeds nearly 75,000 hungry people each month was a natural transition. Celebrating 40 years of serving Ventura County, Food Share works with 190 partner pantries and agencies to distribute over 13 million pounds of food each year.

Monica comes to Food Share after 12 years at the Ventura County Star newspaper as Director of Consumer Sales and Marketing. Her prior experience includes positions with the Walt Disney Company, ABC Television and Whamo! She currently serves as Vice Chair on the Board of Directors with the California Association of Food Banks and was named one of the Top 50 Women in Business by the Pacific Coast Business Times in 2018.

Abby Browning

Chief of the Office of Private Sector / Non-Governmental Organization Coordination, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Abby Browning is the Chief of the Office of Private Sector/ Non-Governmental Organization Coordination at the Governor's Office of Emergency Services. Abby is responsible for developing and maintaining CalOES's relationships with business, associations, companies, and universities, as well as nonprofit, nongovernmental and philanthropic organizations.

Prior to joining CalOES, Abby was the Special Advisor for International Trade in the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development. She was an essential member of the Brown Administration's international team, working on trade missions to China and Mexico, as well as fostering countless other international business connections for California.

Abby has also worked with the California Chamber of Commerce in the International Affairs and Corporate Relations departments, as well as the California Seismic Safety Commission. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from West Virginia University and she earned an M.A. from the School of Government at California State University, Sacramento.

Geoff Green,
Chief Executive Officer
CalNonprofits

Geoff Green is CEO of the California Association of Nonprofits (CalNonprofits), a statewide policy alliance of more than 10,000 nonprofits speaking to government, philanthropy, and the public at large. A long-time

CalNonprofits board member, Geoff previously served as CEO of the Santa Barbara City College Foundation. With more than 25 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, he has worked on a wide variety of issues including affordable housing, access to education, racial equity, and environmental protection.

Under Green's nine years of leadership, the SBCC Foundation raised over \$50 million to support student success programs. In 2016 he led the creation of the SBCC Promise, a groundbreaking initiative that offers all recent, local high school graduates the opportunity to attend college full-time at no cost. A native of the San Francisco Bay Area, Green now resides on the Central Coast. He has served on a diverse array of local, state, and national nonprofit boards in addition to both elected and appointed public office. A dedicated champion of the nonprofit sector, his prior roles include campaign organizer, public affairs radio host, and national park ranger.

Annie Chang

Vice President

Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF)

Annie Chang leads NFF's strategy for engagement with BIPOC nonprofits and other partners in communities to ensure NFF's work is driven by community. Annie joined NFF in 2015 as a consultant and in that role, she has partnered with nonprofit leaders and funders to build the financial health of the social sector through designing initiatives and delivering customized financial management consulting, including financial analysis and strategic financial planning.

Before joining NFF, she was a Senior Program Officer at First 5 LA, working with Los Angeles funders and early care and education organizations to develop programs and coalitions to help young children and their families thrive. She was also a management consultant with Deloitte Consulting's Human Capital practice, where she supported Fortune 500 and government clients with leading organizational change, was a program manager at Center for Asian Americans United for Self-Empowerment and served as a Jesse M. Unruh Assembly Fellow and Legislative Consultant with the California Legislature. Annie received her Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of California, Los Angeles, and her Master of Public Policy from University of Southern California.

Wilfredo Cruz Jr.

Executive Director

Community Resource Project

Wilfredo Cruz Jr. is Community Resource Project's Executive Director. Prior to joining Community Resource Project, Wilfredo Cruz Jr. was the Administrator of the Energy Program at Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK). As the Program Administrator he was responsible for conducting the overall management and operation of the CAPK Energy Program. This included working with his team to plan, organize, staff, implement policies, create and review budgets, and complete federal and state reporting. He has worked on several work groups alongside the California Department of Community Services and Development as well as various community-based organizations around the state. He is currently an Association of California Community and Energy Services board member. Wilfredo also has previous experience in the construction and insurance industries.

Wilfredo brings years of leadership and non-profit experience to CRP. He has been involved in various local, state, and national nonprofits over the last several years, including: Prospanica, Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Active 20/30 Club of Bakersfield, Rotary Club of Bakersfield East, and the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. He has worked alongside local community leaders to build and foster relationships that were essential to establishing and successfully administering new energy programs in Kern County.