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May 24, 2017

Grants Management Advisory Committee (GMAC)

RE: Recommendations for the SFY2018-2019 grant funding cycle, Wellness

Committee Members:

I would like to comment for the record on the recommendations under consideration by the GMAC for the funding of the Wellness Grants - Hunger.

The committee and staff spent a lot of time in formulating the RFA, explaining to agencies how the process works, providing technical assistance to the agencies during the application process, and scoring the applications. In that scoring, consideration was made for those applicants serving rural communities, with a holistic approach, and then the committee decides to adopt "Option 2" funding all applicants, regardless of score, at a percentage that will severely hamper the organizations who truly have adopted a collaborative, holistic approach to hunger and food insecurity in the lifespan.

As it stands, the committee will be shackling the higher scoring collaborative applicants with less than optimum funding for larger scale projects. These projects have the ability to mitigate hunger for a wider segment of our state's population, **including** rural areas. Instead the committee is recommending awarding funds to agencies based solely on their location, not the merits of the projects. Why have a scored application process if the scores carry no meaning? This sends the wrong message to agencies, that rural applicants receive preference, and the application process is not in any way objective.

Perhaps the committee should ask the larger, higher scoring collaborative applicants to work with and incorporate the other lower scoring programs into their work, if possible.

I would encourage the GMAC to **reject** Option 2 (funding all applicants at 77%), but rather follow through with the intentions of the competitive RFA process and award the highest scoring applicants with funding that can make a difference in our state for our citizens.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Dana Serrata, M.S.  
Executive Director