
2025-2026

MACC Advocacy Debrief



METROPOLITAN ALLIANCE of
CONNECTED COMMUNITIES
Courageously Collaborative

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INTRODUCTION

We're a network for resilience.

Our origin story as a network and the subsequent creation of our back-office services is a story of ingenuity and collaboration that were born out of crisis.

We bring together the voices, wisdom, and influence of our network to co-create better operating conditions for our sector that supports our network's shared vision for equitable, thriving, abundant communities.

We believe in the transformative power of human services and we seek to bring about change to address systemic and institutional racism that results in the underinvestment in human service nonprofits, especially those that serve and are led by people of color.

Long-Term Policy Goals

- Gain parity and cost of living increases in grants and contracts to ensure full cost coverage and increase worker pay.

- Change funding terms and conditions to ensure full cost coverage.

- Remove burdensome and problematic funder reporting requirements.

SYSTEMS CHANGE

Narrative Change

Uplifting the value of human services and our workforce

Data Justice

Less burdensome & problematic data that centers community

Pay Justice

Funding that works for our orgs & our workers

Why All Three Are One Fight

The same systems that underfund our organizations also over-burden them with extractive data demands and sustain a public narrative that makes both seem acceptable.

These 3 intersectional and long-term commitments are critical to strengthening the human services ecosystem's ability to strengthen community well-being.

WHAT'S OUR LANE?

Human services can be transformational — but exploitative, extractive systems limit what's possible.



MACC has spent years identifying the central challenge that cuts across our entire network. The answer isn't siloed by issue area. It's structural — and it requires a different kind of coalition and approach. Our membership spans focus areas, community contexts, and organizational sizes. **That breadth is our power.**



MACC anchors a lane no one else can. There are coalitions for housing, for food, for early childhood — but no one is advocating for human services orgs as a sector. We increasingly see this as the opportunity for MACC as a network to leverage our voice and scale. We can speak to the operational realities of human services in ways that subsector coalitions can't.

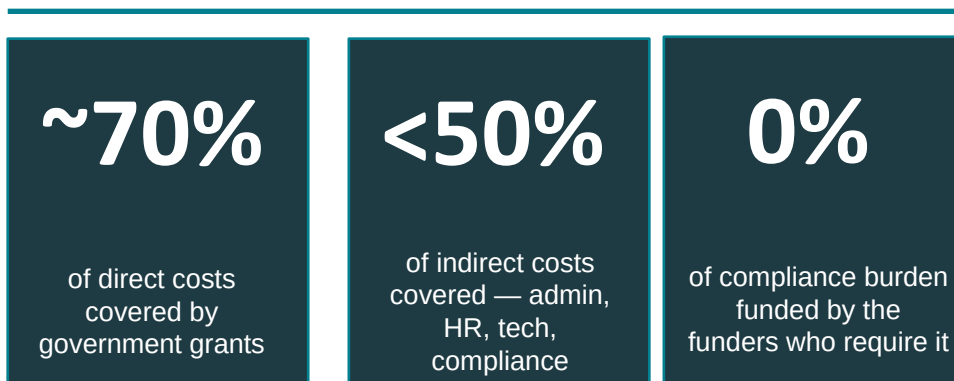


MACC members don't just serve communities — **we are community infrastructure.** We can advocate from that position.

We advocate for the conditions human services organizations need to thrive — fair pay for workers, data that serves communities rather than burdens them, and a public narrative that reflects the real value of this work.

What is Pay Justice to us?

★ Pay Justice means dismantling the "martyr worker" myth and the "overhead" myth and it means our workforce can live in the communities where they work, afford the basics, and build careers with dignity and stability and our organizations have the infrastructure and the resources they need to meet their mission



The Funding Gap

(the overhead myth and the martyr myth in action)

The Burden Gap

Funders demand accountability — which we support. But today's system goes far beyond accountability.

Duplicative reporting

Multiple funders requiring separate data systems, formats, and reports for the same work — none of which talk to each other.

Unfunded admin labor

Every hour staff spend navigating compliance is an hour not spent on the people we serve — and it's paid for out of our own underfunded budgets.

Escalating data demands

Funders keep adding data requirements without adding the funding or systems to manage them. The burden is real. The compensation is not.

Staff burnout & turnover

Administrative overload drives burnout. Burnout drives turnover. Turnover destabilizes organizations and undermines the very outcomes funders say they want.

Contract and grant reform means cleaning out redundancies and building efficiencies — not eliminating accountability.

WHAT PAY JUSTICE REQUIRES

- 01. Full cost funding**
Covering what it *actually* costs to employ people well — including administration, compliance, and infrastructure
- 02. Multi-year, flexible funding**
So organizations can plan, invest in their people, and build stability.
- 03. Grant & contract reform**
Streamlining compliance, eliminating redundant requirements, and building real efficiencies into how state funding works.
- 04. End of risk-shifting provisions**
No more pushing financial risk and unfunded administrative costs onto nonprofits and their workers.

A LOOK AT THE WORK 2025-2026

ON THE GROUND

- 01.** Grant Reform Coalition Leadership: deep collaboration continuing (MACC, MCN, MCF, Propel, WorkWell, United Way among others)
- 02.** Fighting Fraud Narrative: Closely monitoring & responding when fraud prevention proposals will create headaches for nonprofits
- 03.** Protecting Direct Appropriations & funding for community-driven solutions
- 04.** Improving Legislative Approach to Grants: Tools/ guides to educate legislators about nonprofits & improve their grant decision making
- 05.** Applying Pressure to Office of Grants Management: To ensure they review & improve their policies and our voices are heard
- 06.** Proposing Reforms: Bill to require a standard executive summary for every state RF, Bill to require AG registration by any nonprofit receiving a grant

2026 TIMELINE

October 2025- March 2026 Joint Grant Reform Coalition/Legislator meetings	Joint meetings monthly with Rep. Klevorn and Sen. Marty to discuss reforms for state grant making. MACC is driving this work alongside advocacy team at MCN and MCF. Our coalition brought a package of four reforms. The focus for this work is really to advance interests of all nonprofits, but with particular focus on those who have historically had disproportionate challenges accessing funds and for whom managing government funds represents an inequitable burden- greater Minnesota rural organizations, small organizations, and BIPOC-led and –BIPOC serving organizations. Principles of universal design are central to the work approach.	Outcome: Building relationships, skills, cumulative knowledge that can sustain future reform efforts. Legislators helped apply pressure to OGM and Admin Commissioner.
December 2025 Office of Grants Management agreement to quarterly meeting with Coalition advocates	Our coalition secured a quarterly meeting with the Office of Grants Management — building the relationship needed to ensure nonprofit voices are heard as a key stakeholder in how Minnesota manages grants. OGM has historically treated state agencies as their primary audience, despite a mandate that explicitly includes stakeholder engagement, community engagement, and equity in grant-making. In 2024-25, the legislature (at our urging) funded three positions dedicated to equity and community engagement. Those positions remain unfilled and the money unspent. Direct engagement — backed by legislative pressure — is how we push for accountability	Outcome: Building relationships that can inform future reform efforts; Advocating with and holding OGM accountable.
February 2026 Office of Grants Management agreement to include nonprofits in survey to collect input on OGM policy 08- 08, 08-09, and 08-10	The coalition secured nonprofit inclusion in OGM's stakeholder feedback process on state grant management policy — a significant win given that OGM has historically treated state agencies as their primary audience, despite a mandate that explicitly includes stakeholder engagement, community engagement, and equity in grant-making. Current variation across state agencies creates bespoke grant administration that adds inequitable burden — falling hardest on small, rural, and culturally specific nonprofits. The coalition will help promote and host listening sessions to reach a broader, more culturally representative cross-section of nonprofits statewide.	Outcome: We got agreement with OGM to survey nonprofits as a part of their grant policy review.
February 2026 Joint legislator/ coalition meeting: agreement to author grant reform bill	Coalition meeting lead by MACC this month and was successful at getting Representative Klevorn to agree to author a bill for a State Grant/ Contract RFP Exec Summary Requirement. Right now, critical details — eligibility, funding amounts, match requirements — are buried in 30–50-page documents. That burden falls hardest on small, community-rooted nonprofits, which are disproportionately led by and serving communities of color. A required executive summary doesn't just save time — it levels the playing field, so a culturally specific immigrant services organization has the same shot at understanding an opportunity as a well-staffed regional institution. When public funding processes are legible, more diverse providers can compete — and communities historically shut out of public dollars get better access to services built for them.	Outcome: MACC drafted bill language & messaging; secured agreement from Rep. Klevorn to sponsor the bill and share myth busting materials and tools with other legislators. Approximate quote from Representative Klevorn: "<i>I didn't expect much to come out of these meetings together, I was so wrong- and I apologize. I meet with folks all the time that ask for this or that, and I've never had such an engagement with nonprofit advocates that had such a payoff and practical, helpful outcome.</i>"
March 2026 Finalized grantmaking decision framework tool for legislators	The coalition finalized a legislative decision framework to support legislators facing pressure to eliminate direct appropriations — pressure driven by a fraud narrative that has never actually been linked to direct appropriations. The case for the tool: competitive grants systematically favor organizations with administrative capacity, which correlates with size, which correlates with whiteness. Direct appropriations are one of the few mechanisms that can route public investment to organizations with deep cultural trust and community relationships that a standardized RFP would screen out. Eliminating them doesn't reduce funding options equally — it removes the primary on-ramp for historically excluded communities. The framework structures legislative discretion around the right equity questions: would a competitive process risk excluding community-rooted expertise or sole-provider capacity no RFP can adequately assess? Without that check, "whoever can compete, wins" gets called fairness.	Outcome: Tool helped to protect option of direct appropriations; shared in every committee meeting our bill was being heard with positive feedback from legislators; shared on the house floor as the bill was presented for vote. Feedback from Klevorn about how helpful legislators thought it was.

TIMELINE

March 2026 MACC Testimony House committee HF 4462 State RFP Exec Summary Requirement	MACC delivered testimony in person in support of the RFP Executive Summary Requirement Bill.	Outcome: Helped elevate MACC and nonprofit coalition partners by providing testimony on our bill. Received positive feedback in committee.
April 2026 Legislative Testimony: Senate committee SF 4638 State RFP Exec Summary Requirement	MACC delivered testimony in person in support of the RFP Executive Summary Requirement Bill.	Outcome: Helped elevate MACC and nonprofit coalition partners by providing testimony on our bill. Received positive feedback in committee
April 2026 MACC Action Alert: Protect Direct Appropriations	MACC sent out a network action alert to protect direct appropriations: Fight the false fraud narrative: A proposal is moving through the Minnesota Legislature that would ban direct appropriations to nonprofit organizations. Direct appropriations are one of the most effective tools our legislators have to invest directly in their communities. Banning them cuts off a vital funding pathway that many organizations and the communities they serve depend on. This ban will also disproportionately impact organizations serving culturally specific communities and greater Minnesota that are most often excluded from institutional power structures.	Outcome: Helped elevate issue for members, prompting awareness and hopefully action. This didn't end up being included in final legislation.
April 2026 MACC Action Alert: Weigh in on Grant Management Policy	MACC sent out a network action alert to prompt feedback on OGM grant management policy: For the first time the MN Office of Grants Management is asking for input from nonprofits on their grant making policies. We have the opportunity to provide input on 3 key areas: payments, reports, and monitoring. These three areas directly impact the amount of overhead on your plates and the accessibility and usability of these state funds	Outcome: Helped elevate issue for members, prompting awareness and hopefully action; shared in every committee meeting our bill was being heard, and was shared on the house floor as the bill was presented for vote. Feedback from Klevorn about how helpful legislators thought it was.
April 2026 MACC Submission: Feedback on OGM policies 08- 08, 08-09, and 08-10	MACC Submitted comments on 3 policies including Grant Payment, Grant Reporting, and Grant Monitoring that incorporates Pay Justice and Data Justice. These are early seeds for reform we could advocate for in coming years with the Coalition- Assuming OGM may take few or none of our suggestions when they revise these policies. We may need legislative remedy. Comments were based on member roundtables we hosted to gather input on our grant reform platform in 2023 and 2024	Outcome: Provided detailed member-informed policy feedback during comment period.
May 2026 4462 State RFP Exec Summary Requirement Affirmed by Senate- sent to Governor	Right now, critical details — eligibility, funding amounts, match requirements — are buried in 30–50-page documents. That burden falls hardest on small, community-rooted nonprofits, which are disproportionately led by and serving communities of color. A required executive summary doesn't just save time — it levels the playing field, so a culturally specific immigrant services organization has the same shot at understanding an opportunity as a well-staffed regional institution.	Outcome: Bill passed, Governor to sign

LOOKING TO SUMMER/ FALL 2026

Key activities and actions ahead

Activity	Things to know	Call to Action
May/June: Provide Feedback on OGM Indirect Cost Policy	OGM is seeking feedback on the state grant indirect costs policy (or the lack thereof).	Fill out another form! Weigh in on what “necessary and reasonable” indirect costs look like for state grants. Feedback open April 23 – July 23, 2026. MACC Action Alert coming soon!
June: MACC Legislative Session Wrap Up	We’ll do a full wrap up with Amy and the Momentum crew- more detail as we work through all the bills- what passed, what’s next with election season etc.	Register now for the June 10th Zoom In! www.macc-mn.org/WhatsNew/UpcomingEvents.aspx
June: Interim Planning with MCN & Coalition Partners	MACC, MCN, MCF, United Way, Propel and others begin interim planning work starting in early June 2026.	Stay tuned to opportunities to weigh in, what happens next with our advocacy depends vey much on OGM’s posture.
August: Next MACC Government Relations Council	We’ll be meeting every quarter- this will be a key place to help shape what comes next with MACC’s advocacy work & connect with peers	Next gatherings: Aug 6 9:30-11:00am- in person- MACC Oct 6 9:30-11:00am- virtual- Zoom
Summer & Fall: Connect with your Legislator	Take time to connect with your legislators over the summer & fall.	MACC can help you schedule and prep for meetings- lean on us and the Momentum team!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We'd like to thank all the MACC network leaders and staff who contributed their voices and thought leadership to our systems change & advocacy work.

We're just getting started and there's a long road ahead.

We're glad you are with us.

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