











Impact Report

2025

GOLDEN STATE
OPPORTUNITY

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ten years ago, Golden State Opportunity was built on a simple but bold belief: **poverty is not inevitable—and the right policies can change lives.** Today, that belief is proven. Together, we've helped put billions of dollars back into the pockets of working families, built a powerful statewide network of community partners, and made California a national model for using tax policy to fight poverty.

But this milestone is not just about what we've achieved. It's about how we showed up when it mattered most. In the face of economic uncertainty, rising costs, natural disasters, and a federal climate that too often made things harder for working families, we didn't step back—we stepped up. We met people where they were, brought resources into overlooked communities, and stood alongside our partners to ensure families could access the support they've earned. That is our resilience. That is our fortitude. And it's what will carry us forward.

Because the work is far from done. Too many families are still struggling to afford the basics. The systems must work better and we know how to make that happen.

The next ten years are about going bigger: reaching every eligible Californian, advancing policies that create real economic security, and building lasting power rooted in community voice. If the last decade has shown us anything, it's this: **when we combine community leadership, smart policy, and determination, we can change what's possible.**

Let's build what comes next—together.



Amy Everitt
President, Golden State Opportunity





ENSURING EVERY DOLLAR COUNTS

2025 Tax Season in Review

In 2025, Golden State Opportunity (GSO) delivered big for Californians, directly supporting the filing of nearly 48,000 tax returns and the claiming of over $18 million in cash-back credits, including the CalEITC, Young Child Tax Credit, and Foster Youth Tax Credit. That's real money back in the pockets of community members and families.

At the heart of this effort was GSO's Community Connect program. **In 2025, we awarded over $1 million in grants to trusted, community-based organizations rooted in the neighborhoods they serve.** These organizations led the charge, training VITA volunteers, reaching communities in multiple languages, supporting ITIN applications, and guiding families every step of the way.

Across the state, we helped our partners organize 25 Tacos & Taxes events that brought people together in welcoming spaces to get their taxes done and access critical resources. These events bring legislators and their staff members directly to the communities and constituents who benefit from the state-funded program.

The results? A powerful ripple effect. **GSO's direct outreach generated an estimated $56 million in economic activity and $4 million in sales tax revenue.** Statewide, that impact grew to $226.7 million and $16.4 million returned to state and local governments.

STRENGTHENING THE NETWORK

Building Capacity Through Community Connect



In 2025, GSO brought free tax preparation partners from across California together through its Community Connect program and built something powerful. What began as bi-weekly calls evolved into a strong network of organizations learning from one another, sharing resources, and working together to help families access the tax credits and refunds they deserve.

"One of the most powerful things about the Community Connect program is that it creates a space for partners to learn from each other," said Amy Everitt, President of GSO. "Organizations across California are sharing ideas, solving problems together, and building a stronger network to help families access the tax credits they deserve."

The collaboration connected newer tax programs with experienced providers who shared lessons on outreach, operations, and serving more eligible taxpayers. At the same time, newer organizations brought fresh ideas and new approaches to the network.

That support proved especially valuable during times of crisis. Organizations in Northern California that previously helped residents recover after the Camp and Paradise fires shared their experiences with partners in Los Angeles responding to recent wildfires. Together, they discussed how to support displaced families, reconnect residents with services, and rebuild outreach efforts after disaster struck. Those conversations helped partners respond more quickly and confidently in affected communities.

The Community Connect program also amplified the voices of local organizations in state policy discussions. This year, partners joined GSO and the Prosper California coalition in Sacramento for Advocacy Day, meeting with more than 40 legislators to highlight the importance of free tax preparation services and tax credits for working families. By bringing organizations together and elevating their expertise, the program is building a stronger statewide network and expanding access to free, trusted tax help across California.

CLOSING THE GAP

Bringing Free Tax Help Where It's Needed Most

When fire ripped through the community of Altadena, much was lost: lives, homes, and a sense of safety. In the aftermath, many residents also faced another challenge: filing taxes without the documents and resources needed to navigate tax season.

In response, GSO brought free, trusted tax help directly to Californians in "VITA deserts," including disaster-impacted neighborhoods like Altadena and underserved rural communities. The effort helped more families access the refunds and credits they earned while building greater financial stability during recovery. Through our Community Connect grant program, GSO also strengthened local VITA sites by expanding outreach, training volunteers, and building a stronger community-rooted tax network statewide. At the heart of this work was the CalEITC bus, a mobile tax filing center that met people where they are, with stops from Fresno to Sacramento and across Los Angeles County.

In communities like Altadena, outreach went even further through door-to-door canvassing and partnerships with trusted local businesses. GSO organizers distributed flyers, connected directly with survivors, and made sure residents knew help was available. **At events hosted at the Altadena Library, 147 tax returns were filed, resulting in $87,234 in refunds including $29,823 in federal EITC and $9,005 in CalEITC.**

The impact of GSO's outreach went far beyond the numbers. Staff helped residents access forms online in real time, troubleshoot complicated returns, and provide peace of mind during an incredibly difficult moment. "Financial recovery is part of community recovery," said Edit Vosganians, Adult Services Manager of the Altadena Library District. "When we work together—organizations, public institutions, and neighbors—we help people rebuild not just their finances, but their hope."







"GSO supports the work we do at Eastmont Community Center to reach out to community members that trust us and support them through the tax filing process.

Without the leadership of the state, we would not have been able to build a coalition to grow our collective reach, engaging hard-to-reach tax filers and providing them with free tax preparation assistance to bring more money back into their pockets."

ISAÍAS HERNÁNDEZ
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
EASTMONT COMMUNITY CENTER

"Our office is so grateful to GSO, New Economics for Women, and LAVITA for all their hard work in putting on Tacos & Taxes. It really is just getting our community connected to resources that matter, you know, putting money back in their pockets. It's just incredible and we're super appreciative of the opportunity to be able to collaborate on such an important event."

CLARISSA GOMEZ, REPRESENTATIVE,
ASSEMBLYMEMBER JESSE GABRIEL

"What's been most valuable is learning from other organizations. We've built a support system where we share best practices and troubleshoot issues like ITIN applications together. It's made our work stronger."

RAUL GARCIA, SUPERVISING CASE
MANAGER, BARRIO ACTION





FROM COMMUNITY EVENTS TO CAPITOL IMPACT

GSO is making sure the voices of working families are heard both in local communities and at the Capitol. During the 2025 tax season, that work showed just how powerful community advocacy can be. Across California, Tacos & Taxes events brought together families, community partners and lawmakers in meaningful ways. Assemblymembers and senators met directly with constituents and saw firsthand how tax credits help families pay bills, buy groceries, and plan for the future. These events connected policymakers with the people most impacted by their decisions. That connection continued through handwritten thank-you notes from families describing how refunds helped cover rent, food, and childcare costs. GSO delivered those notes directly to Capitol offices, helping legislative staff stay connected to the real-life impact of these programs.

The momentum carried into Sacramento during GSO's Tacos & Taxes Appreciation Lunch, where lawmakers and staff celebrated **more than $1.2 billion returned to working families** this year alone. Leaders were recognized for their support, including Assemblymember Pilar Schiavo, Senator Lena Gonzalez, Assemblymember Mark González, and Senator Monique Limón. State leaders also highlighted GSO's long-term impact as the organization marked 10 years of outreach alongside 10 years of the California Earned Income Tax Credit. **"Thanks to your robust network of trusted community organizations, we've helped put $7.3 billion back into the pockets of California's working families, lifting them out of poverty and giving them a chance to go from surviving to thriving," said Assemblymember Lori Wilson.** Governor Gavin Newsom emphasized the importance of outreach, noting, "Safety net programs only work if people know about them."

A STRONGER FUTURE FOR CALIFORNIA TAX CREDITS

In 2025, GSO worked with legislative champions to advance two bills aimed at expanding tax credits for working families.

Assembly Bill 397, authored by Assembly-member Mark González, would have renamed the Young Child Tax Credit to the California Child Tax Credit and expanded it to all CalEITC-eligible families with children under age 18, and up to age 23 for those with permanent disabilities. The bill received historic support, with 27 legislators signing on as co-authors and 35 backing a budget request to fund the expansion.

Assembly Bill 398, authored by Assembly-member Patrick Ahrens, would have increased the minimum CalEITC credit from $1 to $300 so more workers would receive meaningful refunds. The bill faced no opposition and was supported by 31 organizations across the state. While both bills ultimately did not move forward due to budget constraints, they reflected growing momentum to strengthen California's tax credits.

GSO and its partners worked throughout the year to build support. During Advocacy Day, press conferences, and legislative briefings, advocates met with lawmakers to highlight how tax credits help families stay housed, afford groceries, and care for their children. At 25 Tacos & Taxes events, community members also wrote thank-you cards to their representatives, sharing firsthand how these credits made a difference in their lives.

This growing support from policymakers, partners, and communities reflects a shared commitment to expanding economic opportunity. GSO remains committed to advancing policies that ensure more Californians can access the credits they have earned. Real, lasting change doesn't happen in isolation—it happens when those closest to the challenges are shaping the solutions.



BUILDING POWER TOGETHER

The Future of Prosper California



Prosper California (formerly the CalEITC Coalition) has become one of the state's leading coalitions connecting grassroots experience with policy action. Through a growing network of community-based organizations, advocates, and service providers, the coalition has expanded access to tax credits and free tax preparation while helping reshape conversations around poverty and economic mobility in California.

As a co-lead of the coalition, GSO is committed to strengthening this network and ensuring community organizations are not just participants, but leaders.

Through Community Connect, organizations from San Diego to Eureka bring firsthand knowledge of the barriers their communities face—from language access and immigration concerns to the high cost of tax preparation and limited awareness of available credits. Those insights help shape policies that reflect real-world needs and experiences.

By connecting these local organizations to the broader coalition, GSO is helping ground policy conversations in lived experience while creating opportunities for shared learning, coordinated advocacy, and collective action. Together, partners are transforming individual efforts into a stronger statewide movement for economic opportunity.

The strength of the Prosper California Coalition lies not only in its size, but in its commitment to centering community voices as drivers of policy and systems change. When organizations on the front lines are empowered to lead, the result is not just stronger programs, but greater public support and long-term momentum for lasting change across California.

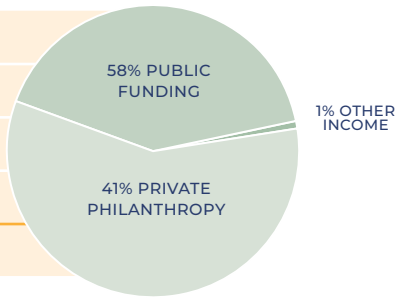




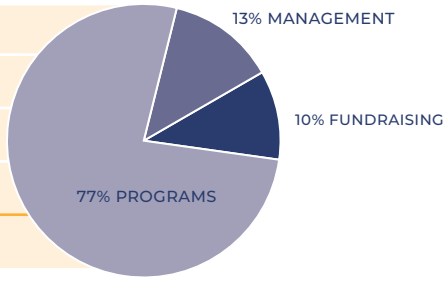




FY 2025 Revenue	
State Grants	$2,619,789
Private Philanthropy	$1,851,422
Other Income	$38,412
	$4,509,623 Raised



FY 2025 Investments	
Program	$4,077,065
Management	$683,222
Fundraising	$547,200
	$5,307,487 Deployed



Unaudited

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