

From: [eliza eller](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: testimony for mental health services in the operating budget
Date: Tuesday, March 08, 2016 12:31:43 PM

Dear Senate Finance Committee members,

I am writing to respectfully ask that you think about the many many families in your districts who utilize basic mental health and addiction treatment services every day, rather than more expensive emergency room care. Mental health services have a complicated stigma - but they are used in the same ways and have the same positive outcomes which save as many lives as primary health care services. These grants are vital for the continued safety and basic wellness of our population in this state!

IF they are cut, even a little, everyone knows that those costs will NOT be saved in the overall state budget - instead, the costs will increase in emergency services AND court/prison costs AND quality of life will dip below acceptable for many families who experience these challenges. Instead, please adopt measures to raise state income so that these health grants can continue to serve the populations who need them most.

With this email, I can ask you to make humane and moral decisions - but instead, I will ask you to make fiscally responsible decisions and make NO CUTS, not even percentage cuts, to the behavioral health grants. Please, DO NOT pull the wool over your own eyes and look the other way. You will be proud of your record and 90% of your constituents will thank you: those who have people in their families who suffer from bi-polar disorder, for example; as well as those who are dealing with the absurd tardiness and overwhelm of the court systems; as well as those who have a loved one hit in a car accident by a drunk driver; as well as those who experience violence at home.

Behavioral illness touches us all. Prevent and treat, don't ignore. It helps. That's just common sense.

Thank you for having the political and moral courage to step up and find ways to pay for these vital grants.

Sincerely,
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