**[Subject: Protect Restorative Practices Funding in Minnesota]**

Dear **[Senator/Representative Legislator’s Name]:**

My name is **[Your Name]**, and I am a resident of **[Your City/Town].** I am reaching out to urge you to reject the proposed funding cuts to the Office of Restorative Practices and maintain the full $5 million biennial investment in statewide restorative justice grants.

The Minnesota Legislature established the Office of Restorative Practices in 2023, recognizing the power of restorative approaches to repair harm, support those who have been harmed, and strengthen communities. However, the Governor’s proposed budget threatens to cut this funding by 60% in the next biennium—before we’ve even completed our first grant cycle.

Minnesotans are deeply invested in this work. Our first round of funding requests totaled $22 million from approximately 60 applicants across 87 counties, far exceeding available resources. Cutting this funding now would undermine the progress we’ve made and limit access to restorative practices for youth, families, and communities in need.

**Why This Matters:**

Restorative justice programs are proven to reduce recidivism, keep youth out of the criminal legal system, and improve outcomes for victims. Counties across the state have seen measurable success:

• The average cost of incarceration in Minnesota is $39,420 per person per year, while restorative practices cost just $1,000 per participant—a fraction of the expense.

**My Personal Experience with Restorative Practices:**

*(Optional: Share a brief personal testimony or story about why restorative justice matters to you—whether as a volunteer, a participant, or someone who has seen its impact. If not, be sure to delete this section).*

The Office of Restorative Practices was created to build statewide infrastructure and support for this work, and it is just getting off the ground. Now, more than ever, it needs full funding to meet the growing demand. I strongly urge you to maintain your $5 million investment in restorative practices in the Department of Children, Youth, and Families’ budget.

Please support funding that keeps Minnesotans safe, supports those who have been harmed, and strengthens our communities. I appreciate your time and commitment to this important issue.

Sincerely,

**[Your Name]**

**[Your Address] (optional)**

**[Your Email] (optional)**