

Dear <<Legislator Name>>

My name is <<enter name>> and I am <<insert your connection to the issue – a person with a disability, a family member of a person with a disability, worker in the public mental system, etc.>> I am writing to urge you not to make General Fund cuts to mental health services in the FY 11 budget.

Previous cuts to mental health services have had a strong negative impact. (Give examples of how the cuts over the past years have affected you, your family, the individuals you serve, etc.)

Further cuts will mean thousands more individuals will not receive essential mental health services and the human cost will be great. The cost to the State will also be great as other institutions such as hospitals and jails will see an increase in individuals struggling with mental illness or substance abuse are less equipped to handle them. (Again, inserting examples of how further cuts would impact you personally is best.)

The number of individuals needing mental health services has been steadily increasing over the past few years while funding for these services has steadily decreased. Mental health and substance abuse services have been disproportionately cut the past two years. If the recently passed Senate version of the Department of Community Health budget is signed into law, more than 30% of general funds for community mental health would be eliminated. Don't further cut services to our most vulnerable citizens at a time when persons are most in need.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Name

Home Town

Phone Number/E-mail Address