

[Your name and contact info]

*Be sure to include address and phone number

Date

Dear [Senator/Representative] _____,

I urge you to take action to reject the cuts to DMH Children, Youth and Families in the Governor's proposed FY26 budget and restore the appropriation to the FY25 funding levels. If you are a parent or caregiver of a youth with mental health challenges, or know someone who is, you understand the difficulties they face. The cuts resulting from the proposed FY26 appropriation will devastate and already struggling system.

Since COVID, access to and availability of appropriate mental health services has declined while the need and acuity have increased. Closing Intensive Residential Treatment Programs for adolescents and the only age 6-12 Intensive Residential Treatment Program in the state; and cutting the successful Emergency Department Diversion program among other services, 50% of DMH case managers, and the home-based PACT-Y services (which rolled out at substantial cost only 2 years ago) will harm our most vulnerable children and youth.

[insert your family's story or professional story - as briefly as possible]

For families, DMH is not the solution of first resort. It is their last hope in a long line of disappointments for their child and family. Isn't this the very population that DMH is supposed to help?

I urge you to protect children, youth and families in your community and across the state by restoring funding for DMH to FY25 levels. Thank you for your service and dedication to the residents of the Commonwealth of MA especially the children.

Sincerely,
[signature]