

March 24, 2020

The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer  
Governor, State of Michigan  
PO Box 30013  
Lansing MI 48909

Dear Governor Whitmer,

Thank you for taking bold actions to stem the tide of the coronavirus and protect our citizens. Unfortunately, direct care workers in the State of Michigan cannot work remotely, and they face significant exposure to COVID-19 during their workday. They typically have the least vacation and sick time of anyone in the essential workforce, if they have any such benefits at all.

As you look at the resources the State is directing to the current public health crisis, please consider the importance and needs of our direct care workers. They provide crucial supports on a daily basis to Michigan citizens receiving services via the state's behavioral health care system. If this workforce becomes any more unstable, much of the mental health system will quickly unravel.

We have asked for years for the earnings of these workers to be prioritized. They deserve the respect of a wage on which they can survive. Please use a supplemental appropriation to help stabilize this workforce and provide for at least a \$1.00 per hour wage increase. We understand that tax revenue is going to quickly become unstable - but this workforce already is.

Sincerely,

