

Chairman Senator John Hoffman
Senate Human Services Committee Members
Minnesota State Senate

Dear Chairman Hoffman and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

As the CEO and Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner at Metro Behavioral Consultants PLLC, I am writing in strong support of SF 2031, which seeks to provide crucial funding to Restoration for All, Inc. (REFA) for mental health, substance use disorder, and suicide prevention initiatives targeted towards Minnesota's African immigrant and refugee communities.

Restoration for All, Inc. has consistently demonstrated a profound commitment to serving culturally diverse communities and directly addressing racial disparities in mental health care and support services. The organization's holistic and culturally relevant approach has positively impacted hundreds of individuals who traditionally face barriers to mental health services, including stigma, linguistic isolation, and limited access to culturally competent care.

Minnesota is currently facing critical gaps in mental health care, particularly within the African immigrant and refugee populations. According to recent Minnesota Department of Health reports, suicide rates and mental health crises among Black/African American youth have been alarmingly increasing. Approximately 40% of Minnesota students have reported seriously considering suicide, with disparities markedly higher among minority and refugee populations.

The proposed funding outlined in SF 2031—\$700,000 each fiscal year for 2026 and 2027—will significantly enhance REFA's ability to implement comprehensive mental health literacy programs, culturally competent suicide prevention strategies, and critical substance use disorder interventions.

As a mental health professional deeply engaged in community-based psychiatric care, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative potential of culturally appropriate interventions. REFA's model, which emphasizes community engagement, culturally tailored education, and targeted interventions, aligns directly with the best practices and urgent needs identified in statewide mental health assessments.

I strongly urge the Senate Human Services Committee to advance SF 2031. Investing in REFA's work is not merely a financial allocation but a pivotal commitment to reducing mental health disparities and improving lives within some of Minnesota's most vulnerable and underserved communities.

Thank you for your dedication to this critical issue and for considering this impactful legislation.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Raphael Omoto, DNP, PMHNP, CNP
CEO, Metro Behavioral Consultants PLLC