

Senator John Hoffman,
Chairman
Senate Human Services Committee



Dear Chairman Hoffman and Committee Members,

On behalf of North Metro Health Institute, I am writing to express our strong support for Senate File 2031, sponsored by Restoration for All Inc. (REFA). This critical legislation addresses significant gaps in culturally competent mental health, substance use disorder, and suicide prevention services among Minnesota's African immigrant and refugee populations.

As the CEO of North Metro Health Institute, I am deeply familiar with the unique mental health challenges faced by our BIPOC communities, especially African immigrants and refugees. Our partnership with REFA involves implementing specialized Mental Health First Aid training for youth and adults within these communities. Through this collaboration, we have directly observed the profound impact that culturally and linguistically tailored mental health interventions can have. Our collective experience has shown that targeted mental health literacy, community education, and suicide prevention training significantly enhance resilience and early intervention outcomes.

Senate File 2031 proposes an essential investment of \$700,000 annually for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, funding that is pivotal for expanding REFA's successful community-driven mental health and suicide prevention initiatives. The culturally responsive programs championed by REFA are vital to bridging service gaps, reducing stigma, and ensuring equitable mental health support for African immigrant and refugee communities across Minnesota.

Therefore, I request that your committee advance this crucial legislation. Your support for SF 2031 will directly impact lives, fostering healthier and more resilient communities throughout Minnesota.

Thank you for your dedication and thoughtful consideration.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Marigi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Elizabeth" and the last name "Marigi" clearly visible.

Mrs Elizabeth Marigi (RN, BSN, PHN)
Program Director/CEO
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