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Chair John Hoffman
Senate Human Services Committee

Chair Hoffman and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to present SF 1138, Senator Mann's bill to fund opioid prevention education for middle and high school students across Minnesota earlier this session. And thank you for including funding for this critical work in the Senate Human Services Omnibus Budget Bill.

Minnesota continues to face a devastating opioid and addiction crisis that is affecting families in every corner of our state. Kids are using. They have friends who use. They see family members struggling with addiction. They need to know how to recognize the signs of an overdose, respond effectively, and seek help.

We are especially grateful to Chair Hoffman for including $425,000 per year for Change the Outcome (CTO) to provide opioid education, highlight emerging drug trends, and deliver overdose prevention training. This investment will allow CTO to reach more schools and more students across the state. Since launching in 2017, CTO has presented in more than 120 schools and reached over 110,000 students.

CTO uses evidence-based instruction on opioid risks, prevention strategies, overdose recognition, and how to respond with lifesaving interventions. Our program features powerful, real-life stories and honest conversations led by young people with personal connections to addiction; messaging that resonates deeply with students.

We empower young people to make informed, life-saving choices. Schools and communities that partner with CTO report increased awareness and stronger engagement in prevention efforts.

This investment in Change the Outcome is a proactive, effective response to Minnesota's opioid crisis. We thank Chair Hoffman and the committee for your leadership in including this funding and urge you to champion its inclusion through the conference committee process.

Sincerely,

Colleen Ronnei
Founder & Executive Director
Change the Outcome