



**Re: FY 2025 Funding Request - \$3.9 million**

April 11, 2024

Dear Committee members,

On behalf of the 17 DOC-funded Community Justice Centers, **we urge you to prioritize our funding request of \$3.9 million.** This represents our FY2024 funding of \$3.5 million, plus a 10% increase for rising staffing costs, programming costs, and inflationary increases to operating expenses.

Throughout the legislative session, we were proud to hear from legislators, state administrators, criminal justice system partners and others about the high value that the CJs offer the State, our communities, and most importantly, those directly impacted by crime.

**Without these funds, we cannot ensure our valuable restorative justice services (including restorative justice panels and reentry services) continuing without interruption in FY25.**

The administration has included in their budget, which the House passed, enough funding to revert back to FY22 funding levels. This results in a \$586,311 reduction of our contracts. Spread out over 17 CJs, that's an average of almost \$35,000 per center, which will undoubtedly lead to staff and program cuts. Even level funding at \$3.5 million will be experienced as a cut due to inflation and staffing costs.

**CJCs will undoubtedly be faced with tough decisions regarding staff and program cuts.**

CJCs play an invaluable role as part of our criminal justice system and have been named repeatedly through this Legislative session as valued partners. We respectfully request that value to come through in the FY 2025 budget through a **\$3.9 Million allocation to CJCs.**

Thank you,

Addison County Restorative Justice Services, Jean Stone  
Barre Community Justice Center, Jeannie Macleod  
Brattleboro Community Justice Center (at Youth Services, Windham County), Mel Motel  
Burlington Community Justice Center, Rachel Jolly  
Center for Restorative Justice (Bennington), Leitha Cipriano  
Essex Community Justice Center, Jill Evans  
Franklin Grand Isle Restorative Justice Center, Harmony Bourgeois  
Greater Falls Community Justice Center, John Ungerleider  
Hartford Community Justice Center, Martha McLafferty  
Lamoille Restorative Center, Heather Hobart  
Montpelier Community Justice Center, Carol Plante  
Newport Community Justice Center, Lyn Gatt  
Orange County Restorative Justice Center, Jessie Schmidt  
Rutland County Community Justice Center, Damien Barnes  
South Burlington Community Justice Center, Josef Lavanway  
The Community Restorative Justice Center (St. Johnsbury), Neil Favreau  
Williston Community Justice Center, Cristalee McSweeney