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To Whom It May Concern,

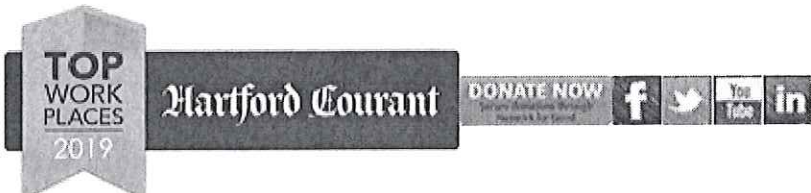
I should be dead. I have bipolar disorder and I would not be where I am today without the medication and therapy that I have been fortunate enough to afford due to my family's financial status. I am a completely different person today than I was 4 years ago. I am now a full-time employee, paying taxes, and contributing to society. Not many people are as lucky as I am. I am writing this email as a plea for you to please consider the magnitude of your decision in regard to increasing the funding for community services in your new budget.

Treatment for psychiatric and substance use disorders is extremely expensive, but what is more expensive are the disability payouts, costs of imprisonment due to criminal activity, costs to employers and businesses whose employees are affected, increased police activity, and other financial consequences of leaving these conditions untreated. How can you afford not to increase funding for community services?

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Jessica



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