

February 16, 2023

Testimony SB 5505

Dear Co-Chair, Sollman, Co-Chair Evans, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Wemimo Ayannubi, A Restorative Justice Practitioner, I am the Community Resource Advocacy Coordinator for Conflict Artistry LLC, and I am writing to support the Senate Bill 5505 for continued funding of the Criminal Justice Commission's Restorative Justice Grant Program.

RJ (Restorative Justice) Practice provides an alternative to the current Judicial system, and it is centered around healing, transformation, accountability, and re-integration. This practice is survivor focused and community rooted, the three stages that most Restorative Justice Programs practice encompass these values. The healing centered approach commences with an intake that provides a chance for the participants to learn more about what the dialogue process entails, and to explore what the process of the dialogue will be. Then it is proceeded by the dialogue, which consists of the event (which gives the participants, either together or separately, a chance to talk about what happened), then Impact- which comprises of a reflection on what impacts were experienced, the effects of the event, and finally the Reparations- agreements, accountability measures agreed upon during the dialogue.

This Practice is committed to Equity, and inclusion of community, and this is what the community needs to experience growth, unity, and intentional accountability.

The CJC funded Restorative Justice Programs have been working diligently to divert cases from convictions and improve the communities. As a practitioner, I have seen firsthand the effect a transformative dialogue process like RJ has on individuals and the community. I have witnessed people heal, and the willingness to be intentional as a community member.

I therefore urge the Legislature to fund the Criminal Justice Commissions Restorative Justice Programs, to reflect the commitment of the legislature to Public Safety.

Sincerely,

Wemimo Ayannubi

Community Resource Advocate

Conflict Artistry LLC