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July 23, 2012

City of Madison  
Community Services Committee

Dear Committee Members,

Recognizing that you have many people wanting to testify this evening about many valuable programs, I'm submitting this letter on behalf of the Rape Crisis Center rather than appearing again. We know that these decisions are extremely difficult, and appreciate the significant time and effort that you put into the process.

As the agency responsible for 24/7 crisis response to victims of sexual assault throughout our community, Rape Crisis Center continues to face ever-increasing needs for our services in the face of insufficient financial resources. We're committed to continuing this work, and to being here for every victim who needs us, any time, night or day.

We don't doubt that you understand the value of these services – but since we can't bring our clients to testify publically about the impact of rape in their lives, and how essential RCC's support was during their trauma, it's up to me to try to convey how compelling the need is on their behalf.

By speaking on behalf of the rape victims we serve, I hope to ensure their voices are not left out of this community process. No one should have to experience sexual violence and victimization, which is why RCC is committed to prevention outreach. And certainly no victim should ever have to face the aftermath of sexual assault without support – which is why RCC's 24-hour crisis support is so crucial.

As I expressed last week, we are grateful to be included in the proposed budget at flat funding, and will work to manage again this cycle – continuing our reduced staffing, limited personnel benefits, conscientious spending decisions and every type of economizing we can ethically justify while maintaining high quality, appropriate services in keeping with best practices for trauma victims.

As we all plan for future years and discuss how to provide the services Madison residents need – particularly in the Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault & Crisis Intervention area – we look forward to working with you, the Mayor, and the broader community to increase the overall resources to begin to meet the magnitude of the need.

Respectfully,

*Kelly*  
Kelly Anderson  
Executive Director