

Chris O'Brien

From: Mark Goldberg-Foss <mgoldb15@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 2:58 PM
To: Chris O'Brien
Subject: RI State Budget

Dear Mr. O'Brien,

As Rhode Islanders deal with an unprecedented public health crisis and its compounding effect on economic insecurity, we need a state budget that reflects the priorities of Rhode Islanders. We need more funding for Medicaid, public housing, and Green New Deal jobs.

We need a fiscally and morally responsible public safety system. That means less funding for police weapons, vehicles, and prison facilities. It means more funding for the housing, mental health, and community-building services that actually increase safety, and for non-police anti-violence interventions that actually reduce violence. Most egregiously, we cannot spend \$35 million on a new state police barracks, especially while school buildings in our cities are crumbling.

Pandemic-induced budget shortfalls should be balanced by reversing tax cuts for the wealthiest families, and reducing the amount we spend on incarceration and policing. Balancing the budget on the backs of the most marginalized in our state is not only a moral disaster, but fiscally shortsighted as well. We will spend more in the long run if unlimited support for policing and incarceration is our solution to social problems, and we will all be worse off for it.

Best,
Mark Goldberg-Foss
30 Vernon St., Providence RI