



June 28, 2011

FILED
Court Administrator

The Honorable Kathleen Gearin
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

JUL 5 2011

By BH Deputy

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Dear Chief Judge Gearin,

62CV115203

I am writing to alert you to the negative impacts that a temporary government shutdown would have on Tubman and, most importantly, on the families it serves.

Tubman provides safe shelter, legal services, counseling, youth programming and community education to victims of domestic violence in the Twin Cities metro area. In addition to our two emergency shelters in Hennepin and Washington Counties, we also operate eleven transitional housing units. Clearly, the need for the services the Tubman provides is significant; our 128 beds are overcapacity 277 days of the year. Because the Minnesotans served by the Tubman are in crisis and would be homeless without the services we provide, they are never turned away.

Tubman depends on state and federal funding for its daily operations, including those provided through a contract with the Office of Justice Programs that runs through September 2011. Because Tubman's federal funding is administered by the State of Minnesota, Tubman would lose access to that important source of funding during a shutdown as well. In other words, the shutdown will not only deprive Tubman of state funds, but will undermine federal objectives with respect to the funds the federal government has designated for domestic violence prevention. Tubman does not have the resources to operate without state and federal funding.

In the event of a government shutdown, Tubman will be forced to drastically cut both staff and services immediately. Because of dramatic expense cuts made earlier in the year, Tubman believes it will initially have sufficient cash flow that to barely keep its shelters open, using a skeleton staff, and through the recruitment of volunteers and interns. If the shutdown lasts longer than one to two weeks, however, Tubman will have no choice but to close all shelters and cease providing emergency services. This potential closure and loss of funding comes at a particularly difficult time for Tubman. As you may have heard, one of our shelters caught fire on June 16th, causing the entire building to be evacuated and leaving it unusable.

I cannot overemphasize the nightmare the closing of our shelters would be for our clients. Many would be left with two options: become homeless or return to a violent home. Additionally, legal clients would be left without advocacy in court and clinical clients would be without groups or classes. These scenarios are unacceptable to Tubman and, we hope, to you as well. We therefore respectfully request that you hold that the funding of Tubman's shelter services is vital to the State's health, safety, and welfare.

Sincerely,

Beverly Dusso
President, Tubman

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