Dear Co-Chairs Brownsberger and Day and other members of the Special Commission on Correctional Funding,

My name is Caz Novak, and I am writing to encourage the Special Commission on Correctional Funding to decrease funding to sheriffs and to the Department of Correction, to hold law enforcement accountable and demand transparency, and to recommend that funds be oriented away from the criminal justice system, and towards other social services and support networks.

I work in Boston as a Substance Use Clinician, where I interact with many justice-involved clients. I have seen firsthand the ways in which the criminal justice system harms clients and hampers their recovery, rather than supporting them and aiding their rehabilitation. My clients repeatedly express a desire for a justice system that supports, rather than punishes.

I believe that this Commission has an opportunity to take the first steps toward building a justice system that more fully supports the marginalized, and I sincerely hope that they listen to the recommendations submitted by various advocacy groups, including the Group Organizational Testimony on Funding submitted this week.

I submit this testimony with excitement about the good, transformative work that can be done by this Special Commission, and I look forward to seeing the fruit this process bears.

Sincerely,

Caz Novak