



January 23, 2018

Sandra Lindsey, CEO
SCCMHA
500 Hancock
Saginaw, MI 48602

Subject: Support for SCCMHA 298 RFI and Pilot Application

Dear Ms. Lindsey:

The Saginaw Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Youth Advocacy Council (SOGI YAC) is comprised of community members and area professionals who have joined forces to "Identify risks and explore needs for SOGI youth in our community with a focus on collaboration, education, outreach and support." SCCMHA has embodied this mission statement through activities such as sponsoring a local LGBTQ+ youth needs survey, inviting area partners to participate in training to learn about the science of transgender development, and designing and delivering a research-based SOGI Safe curriculum to mental health and children's service providers.

We, the undersigned representatives of SOGI YAC, are writing to express our support of SCCMHA as you complete the 298 RFI submission and in hopes that SCCMHA is selected as a Pilot site. The many risks impacting LGBTQ+ youth and family members (such as exponentially higher rates of traumatic experiences, suicidal ideation, and substance use) are issues facing individuals here in the Saginaw area. Continuing to integrate services locally, and within sensitive and informed environments that utilize best practices, makes financial sense. More importantly, this approach will save lives and positively influence the places we all live, work, and play within.

We thank you for all that you do to advance services in our community for LGBTQ+ individuals and their families. Sincere wishes for a successful 298 RFI and Pilot application.

Regards,

Patrick Spator - Inclusive Justice, Co-Chair
Heather Wale Knipady, APPRECOTS, CEO
Dalea Smith, Saginaw Max System of Care, Cultural & Linguistic Competency Coordinator
Jim Fineman, Dir. CS/ORB
Linda A. Shuler, PFLAG President
Chris Lanckney, Executive Director - Perceptions, Inc.
Leo Rowlo - PFLAG Tri-Cities - Officer of the Board