



City of Lakeville *Positioned to Thrive*

January 10, 2023

Abijah on the Backside
Canterbury Park
Shakopee, MN 55379

Re: Request for Letter of Support for Abijah's on the Backside (H.F. 506)

To whom it may concern,

The City of Lakeville Fire Department supports Abijah's on the Backside for their role in providing mental health support. The staff at Abijah's on the Backside truly understand the unique challenges faced by First Responders, and their families. They know that it can be difficult to put words to the trauma Lakeville firefighters witnessed and the difficulties they have faced. At Abijah's they remove every barrier to seeking mental health and wellness support with the following components: no cost, no reporting, no formal diagnosis is needed or provide, and clients do not need to recount the details of past traumas, only to be present and open.

Lakeville firefighters are very visible. We serve our community very well, strive to be visible and to convey confidence with the people we serve that we are physically capable and highly trained to serve them in their time of need. Our community doesn't see what firefighters and other First Responders are thinking about and working through after the call. Abijah on the Backside has experience with how to support our firefighters with this part of their work so that firefighters can continue to serve their community and be a strong part of their family.

Abijah on the Backside has been a welcome relief in providing our department members support in their time of need. As you know one the major issues, we face in public safety in ensure our most important asset (our staff) is taken care of. Abijah has been there for our members and provides services to help cope and become resilient to continue to work as firefighters in our



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community. Several Lakeville firefighters have received direct support from Abijah and these services were provided at no cost.

We are asking you to support us by providing them financial funding to H.F. 506 so that Abijah can continue their services to not just our firefighters, but other public safety teams that are struggling with the mental health in public safety.

Thank you for considering this funding application and for continuing to support Lakeville firefighters

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Meyer".

Michael Meyer
City of Lakeville, Fire Chief