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Member Agencies

Blackstone Valley
Advocacy Center

Domestic Violence
Resource Center of
South County

Elizabeth Buffum
Chace Center

Women's Resource Center

Task Force

Sisters Overcoming
Abusive Relationships

Affiliate Members

Center for Southeast Asians
Crossroads Rhode Island
Family Service of Rhode Island

McAuley Ministries –
McAuley Village

Progreso Latino
YWCA Rhode Island

To: Representative Marvin L. Abney, Chair of the House Finance Committee
Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee

From: Lucy Rios, Executive Director
RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Date: April 3, 2025

Re: **Support for House Bill 5739**

On behalf of our network of member agencies statewide, and SOAR, our taskforce of survivors, the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV) appreciates this opportunity to express our **support for House Bill 5739** to enhance investment in our state's Crime Victim Compensation Program (CVCP) administered by the Office of the General Treasurer. This bill funds the state crime victim compensation program through an additional one-dollar (\$1.00) fine on certain traffic violations, increasing the funds made available to support victims and survivors of crime in our state.

Each year in Rhode Island, hundreds of victims of crime are supported by funds awarded through our state's CVCP. Each victim can access up to \$25,000 to help cover expenses related to healing and recovering after experiencing crime. Current program funds are put to critical use supporting victims and their families with:

- Crime scene clean up
- Dependent care
- Economic support
- Funeral/burial costs
- Medical/dental services
- Mental health services
- Relocation costs
- Sexual assault forensic exams
- Travel costs

The importance of this program to survivors of crime, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking, cannot be overstated. These funds are used by survivors every day to exit dangerous situations, access mental health counseling, or recover costs related to lost wages or medical bills. Our CVCP helps relieve some of the stress and economic burden placed unfairly on people in our state who have survived a violent crime.

The majority of applicants for crime victim compensation in our state come from communities of color – Rhode Islanders who identify as Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, or identify with two or more races are overrepresented among applicants for victim compensation.¹ Increasing investment in this program is a step that our state can take towards improving economic justice and equity for communities that are most impacted by violent crime.

We support this bill and are hopeful that sustained funding and attention to this program will greatly benefit victims in RI. Increased investment in our CVCP will support the Office of the General Treasurer to further expand options and supportive resources for all victims in our state.

We thank the Office of the General Treasurer for introducing this legislation and we look forward to further conversations with the Committee regarding the additional ways this life-saving program can be enhanced in the future. Thank you for considering our support of House Bill 5739.

¹ Treasury Department, Rhode Island. (2022). *Victim Compensation Formula Grant Program Annual Performance Measures Report October 01, 2021 - September 30, 2022*. Office for Victims of Crime. <https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/rhode-island-annual-report.pdf>

Testimony in support of Joint Resolution H6016 / S923

Peter Trafton, Providence Rhode Island, April 1, 2025

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

I write in strong support of H6016 by Rep. Cortvriend, Sen. DiMario, and colleagues.

With federal funds disappearing from view, and ever more serious needs for the best data we can obtain, for evaluating coastal risks and planning resilience support, we must invest in the required tools.

For our coasts at risk, this means we must continue to maintain the three vital tools for which FY 2026 funds are requested:

- RI-CHAMP for Storm modeling
- STORMTOOLS for GIS mapping of inundation
- MYCOAST RI for coastal imaging

Please help the Ocean State maintain its abilities to protect our Coasts and those who live and work along them!

Thanks for considering my comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "PTrafton". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized, with the "P" and "T" being prominent.

Peter Trafton