



641 Bald Hill Road
Warwick, RI 02886
401-467-9940
www.ricadv.org
ricadv@ricadv.org
24-hour Helpline:
800-494-8100

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
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Date: April 24, 2025

Re: **House Bill 5390 – VICTIM Act**

On behalf of our network of member agencies and SOAR, our taskforce of survivors, the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV) appreciates this opportunity to express our **strong support for House Bill 5390, VICTIMS OF CRIME TRAUMA INFORMED MOBILIZATION (V.I.C.T.I.M.) ACT**. This act would establish the VICTIM Fund program which would support nonprofit organizations providing victim services and advocacy in RI by allocating \$30 million per year to the DPS budget in order to fund the program and staffing.

The RICADV is Rhode Island's only recognized domestic violence coalition made up of agencies serving victims throughout the state. Our full-member agencies were among the first to provide services for victims of domestic violence in R.I. and have been the bedrock of our community's response to domestic violence for almost half a century. However, as federal Victims of Crime Act funds wane, the resources that DPS can pass through to victim-serving organizations are scarce and leave many victims unsupported. It is imperative that these lifeline programs for many survivors of domestic violence are strengthened during this time of drastic federal cuts to victim services funding.

The member agencies of the RICADV provide essential services to thousands of survivors of domestic violence and their children every year in RI. In 2024 alone, RICADV member agencies served 9,661 individual victims, provided 46,318 individual services, and answered 12,716 calls to the Victims of Crime Helpline and Agency Hotlines. Each of these statistics represent an increase from 2023. Yet due to funding cuts, these agencies have been forced to lay off staff, combine advocate positions, and scale back programs – all during a time when victims' needs have only increased and intensified.

By allocating just 10% of the \$7,800 Rhode Island spends per prisoner each year, Rhode Island's ability to commit \$30 million to critically important victim services would be achievable. Further state or federal losses to the resources that sustain victim-serving organizations in our state would be catastrophic. We look forward to working with the House Finance Committee and the Rhode Island General Assembly by investing essential funds to prevent domestic violence in our state and to safeguard the lives of Rhode Islanders with some of the most life-threatening needs: Victims of domestic abuse.