

Chairman Marvin Abney
House Finance Committee
RI State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Testimony in support of H5323

Dear Chairman Abney and Members of the House Finance Committee,

I write in strong support of Representative Casey's Join Resolution to Support Sojourner House, H5323.

I spent almost a year wondering if, given my situation, I could receive help from an institution. All my plans were in my head, but for fear of being discovered, I didn't follow through.

I felt very alone. I cried all the time, suffered panic attacks, anxiety, and anguish. I blamed myself because this wasn't the life I wanted for my children. I even thought they would be better off if I didn't live. I thought and planned every day about how to make sure I and my children didn't suffer. The truth is that when you're being emotionally abused, you don't think. Some people feel worthless, and the mental control another person has doesn't help you make better decisions.

Months passed, and I kept thinking about how to get out of that place. I couldn't find a way out. Until March came, and things got worse. Until a friend who was also going through a difficult time told me you should call the hotline, do it for you and your children. I called, and they referred me to Sojourner House (I swear, if I had known sooner, my brain wouldn't have deteriorated so much, thus avoiding so many panic attacks while driving in the middle of the street). My God, how many times I had to go to bed at 6 p.m. just to avoid seeing that man in my house.

Sojourner has been, for me, after God, my earthly salvation. I was on a list, but God spared my life while I waited for my turn to be treated. (THERE ARE MANY WOMEN WHO NEED THIS IMPORTANT INSTITUTION.) Seven months later, I left, desperate, not knowing where I would sleep with my two children. Since that moment, I have had unconditional support from Sojourner: advocacy support, legal support, psychological support, emotional support from my advocates, food, and a roof. They are People with a human touch, treating people with compassion. I am very grateful; I recommend Sojourner.

I'm still in recovery, but the support has taken me to another level of emotions and confidence. I'm a different person and will continue to improve. This project should be in my country, I tell you from the bottom of my heart. My words fall short. And I end by giving infinite thanks to the everyone at Sojourner House that has helped me; I know they do everything with love and

vocation.

So, thank you so much.

I know that I and Sojo will be happy about the person I'll be when I finish my process.

Please support this \$500,000 allocation for Sojourner House.

Thank you for your time and review of this testimony.

Sincerely,

A.H

(Name abbreviated for safety concerns)