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May 22, 2025

Chairman

House Finance Committee

RI State House

82 Smith Street

Providence, RI 02903

Re: Testimony in support of H5390

Dear Chairman and members of the committee:

I write in strong support of H5390, the Victims of Crime Trauma Informed Mobilization (VICTIM) Act.

I write to you today as part of a coalition of 26 organizations advocating for a dedicated line item for victim services in the state budget. These organizations serve over 42,000 victims annually, yet the state has not allocated funding to support these vital programs, relying instead solely on federal funding.

Most other states, including neighboring Massachusetts and Connecticut, invest state funds in victim service programs. It is time that Rhode Island joins these other states and prioritize the 42,000 victims at a small fraction of the cost that we spend on our prisoners.

We believe this is a solid investment in the future of Rhode Islanders. We know the cost of intimate partner violence can be over \$100,000 for a victim in terms of lost wages, mental health and health care. Our programs reduce those costs and help break the cycle of violence since the vast majority of domestic violence victims also have young children.

Current federal policies and spending cuts put victims at greater risk, just as we are experiencing increased need for safety and support services. It's the right time for Rhode Island to invest in these life-saving programs, as other states have, to reduce future costs and break the cycle of violence.

**Please pass the Victims of Crime Trauma Informed Mobilization Act this year.**

Very truly yours

Richard Godfrey