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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 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 8, 2026

**Re: Support for House Bill 8155**

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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 8155**. This bill would increase the award amount victims can use for relocation expenses from \$5,000 to \$8,000. Increasing the amount of funds made available for relocation to support victims and survivors of crime in our state is essential for helping to enhance victim safety.

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. Page 9 of RICADV's [2016-2020 RI Domestic Violence Homicides report](#), highlights research indicating that the period of time immediately after a survivor takes steps to end the abusive relationship, report abuse, or leave the abusive partner is uniquely dangerous: "The time after a victim ends an abusive relationship can be one of the most dangerous periods. Perpetrators of domestic violence will often escalate their tactics of abuse as they start to lose control over the victim.

We also know that many survivors are victims of financial abuse and are often prevented from gaining resources that would allow them to leave. This often leads to survivors staying with the abuser because they do not have the resources and options to leave. Our CVCP helps relieve some of the stress and economic burden placed unfairly on people in our state who have survived a violent crime by providing them with the necessary funds to safely relocate. Increasing the amount of funds a victim of a violent crime can be awarded to relocate to \$8,000 would create more safe options for victims fleeing violence by expanding the opportunities and options available to find safety.

We support this bill and are hopeful that sustained funding and attention to this program will greatly benefit victims in RI. Future 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 sponsor and 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 8155.**