



May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney  
Chairperson, House Finance Committee  
82 Smith Street  
Providence RI 02903

**Re: Support H8156 Domestic Violence Prevention Act**

Chairperson and Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Liz Gledhill, and I am the Director of the Center for Trauma Informed Policing at Family Service of Rhode Island. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of H8156, which would create the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivor Services Fund in Rhode Island.

Every day, our staff and partners work alongside survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, homicide, and other traumatic crimes. We see firsthand the overwhelming barriers survivors face immediately after violence occurs and throughout the long process of recovery. Survivors often need emergency safety planning, crisis counseling, advocacy, forensic interviews, transportation, court accompaniment, housing support, mental health treatment, and long-term trauma services — all while trying to navigate fear, financial instability, and profound emotional trauma.

The reality is that the need for survivor services continues to grow while nonprofit agencies across Rhode Island struggle with limited and inconsistent funding. Programs are often forced to rely heavily on competitive federal grants that may fluctuate from year to year and do not always provide sustainable support for direct services. Often those federal funds streams exist at the whims of an administration that doesn't center the lives of victims when confronting violence. H8156 represents a critical investment in Rhode Island's ability to provide stable, trauma-informed support to survivors when they need it most, regardless of what is happening within the federal landscape.

At the TIP Center, we understand that trauma does not end when a police report is filed or when a case leaves the courtroom. Survivors and families frequently require months or years of support to heal and regain stability. When services are underfunded, survivors experience longer wait times, reduced access to care, and fewer opportunities for meaningful recovery. This burden disproportionately impacts children, marginalized communities, and individuals already facing economic hardship.

Creating a dedicated survivor services fund would strengthen the statewide network of organizations that respond to violence and trauma every day. It would allow agencies to expand direct services, retain trained staff, reduce gaps in care, and ensure that survivors are not left without support during the most difficult moments of their lives.

This legislation is not simply about funding programs. It is about ensuring that survivors in Rhode Island are met with compassion, safety, dignity, and meaningful support after experiencing



violence. It is about recognizing that recovery from trauma requires sustained community investment.

On behalf of the TIP Center and Family Service of Rhode Island, I urge you to support H8156.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to supporting survivors across Rhode Island.

Respectfully submitted,

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