



March 12, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Written Testimony to Support 2026 – H8086

Chair McEntee and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

My name is Michelle Loranger, and I submit this written testimony as the Executive Director of Day One.

Day One has the honor to serve as Rhode Island's Sexual Assault Coalition and the RI Children's Network – State Chapter of Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs). For over 50 years, we have provided compassionate, trauma-informed, and comprehensive services to victims and survivors of sexual and interpersonal violence across the lifespan. We are pleased to offer our strong support for H8086 – Relating to Criminal Procedure: Statute of Limitations for Sexual Assault Offenses.

Each year, Day One works with thousands of survivors, and we know that this type of abuse is complex. Delayed disclosures, especially among those abused as children or adolescents are not the exception, but the norm. According to the Center for Child Protection, less than 25% of victims disclose immediately following the abuse, with the average age of disclosure ranging from 45 to 65 years old. Survivors often wait years to report due to fear of retaliation or disbelief, confusion, shame, power imbalances, and memories impacted and/or distorted by trauma.

When statutes of limitations expire before survivors are emotionally or psychologically ready to report, the legal system effectively closes the door to justice before they are ready to come forward. H8086 addresses this reality by extending and adjusting reporting timelines so survivors have a meaningful opportunity to seek legal accountability.

This bill is not only survivor-centered but also critical for public safety. When survivors come forward, even years later, they can reveal patterns of abuse, identify individuals who may have harmed others, support child welfare and law enforcement investigations, and strengthen community protection.

Across the country, states are updating statutes of limitations to reflect modern understanding of trauma and disclosure – especially related to the most heinous of offenses, sexual abuse. Rhode Island has taken steps in this direction, and H8086 thoughtfully builds on that progress. These changes do not guarantee prosecution, convictions, or the safety of children in a perpetrator's care, but they preserve the possibility—ensuring access to justice and child welfare protections when survivors are ready. Day One respectfully urges the Committee to support and advance H8086.

Thank you for your time, your commitment to survivors, and your leadership on these critical issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Loranger".

Michelle Loranger, MPA
Executive Director