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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 Carol Hagan McEntee, Chair of the House Judiciary Committee
Honorable Members of the House Judiciary Committee

From: Lucy Rios, Executive Director
RI Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Date: April 2, 2026

Re: Concerns Regarding House Bill 7508 as Written; Request for Amendments

On behalf of our network of member agencies and SOAR, our taskforce of survivors, the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV) appreciates this opportunity to **request specific amendments in a Sub A to House Bill 7508 that would allow the RICADV to support this legislation.** We respectfully request language to be included clarifying that *all* domestic violence offenses under RIGL 12-29-2 would not qualify for and are exempt from automatic expungement of criminal records. Currently it is unclear in the language of this bill whether or not domestic violence offenses would be eligible for automatic expungement. Without the inclusion of language which clearly states that all domestic violence offenses would be exempt from automatic expungement, the RICADV cannot support this bill.

Survivor safety and offender accountability are critical, and holding documented repeat offender abusers accountable in an impactful way is particularly important. In our recent publication, the [2016-2020 RI Domestic Violence Homicides report](#), on page 4, we concluded: *“Just over half of the perpetrators had previous involvement in domestic violence-related judicial proceedings. Fifty-five percent of the perpetrators were or had been subject to a civil domestic violence restraining order [before committing the domestic murder], and 45% of the perpetrators had previously been convicted or pled nolo contendere in a domestic violence case.”* Since a potentially deadly case of intimate partner violence could take place with a documented track record in the system, offenders with multiple DV convictions in their history must be taken seriously and survivors must be believed when they report domestic abuse. Truly holding a violent repeat domestic abuse perpetrator accountable can be the difference between life or death for survivors.

Another concern is that this bill does not include language for notifying survivors if an offender's records qualify for automatic expungement or are being automatically expunged. These types of notifications are vital for survivors' safety because they allow them to make the best-informed decisions possible when addressing their own safety. For this reason, we do not support automatic expungement of criminal records for domestic violence offenses under RIGL 12-29-2.

With the inclusion of these amendments pertaining to a specific and clear domestic violence offense conviction carve-out when considering the automatic expungement of criminal records, the RICADV would then be able to support this important criminal justice reform bill.