



State of Rhode Island
Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos

March 31, 2026

Representative Carol Hagan McEntee
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
82 Smith Street, House Lounge
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Letter of Support for H7652: An Act Relating To Criminal Procedure -- Sentence And Execution

Dear Representative McEntee:

I write to you in support of H7652: An Act Relating To Criminal Procedure -- Sentence And Execution. This bill requires sentencing court to consider whether defendant is parent of child, or caregiver of elderly, disabled or terminally ill person whose well-being would be adversely affected by the person's incarceration and if so, shall impose a non-jail sentence.

The criminal justice system impacts more than those who are incarcerated. The National Institute of Justice as far back as 2017 reported significant social and mental impacts amongst children of incarcerated parents. According to their findings, children who have both a mother and a father incarcerated exhibited significant increases in depression, children of incarcerated parents are significantly more likely to be suspended and expelled from school, and there is a strong correlation between a parent's involvement in the criminal justice system and the child's eventual involvement.

As elected leaders in the State of Rhode Island, we are always tasked with being conscious of the unintended consequences of our actions. Within the criminal justice system, so too should the ripple effects to an individual's families and eco-system be considered. For these reasons, I urge you to vote this bill favorably out of committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sabina Matos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sabina Matos
Rhode Island Lieutenant Governor
CC: Representative Cherie Cruz