

## Roberta DiMezza

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**From:** Angela Boisclair <angbois@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2026 10:41 AM  
**To:** House Judiciary Committee; Roberta DiMezza  
**Cc:** Rep. Casimiro, Julie A.; lisaeddington@gmail.com  
**Subject:** HB 7431

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Dear R.I. Legislature: April 15, 2026

My name is Angela Boisclair. I live at 37 Blackrock Rd. in Coventry, RI. I am writing in support of HB 7431, also known as Harter's Law, to extend the statute of limitations for first degree child abuse to 35 years.

I worked for over 38 years for the North Kingstown School department as classroom teacher and Reading Specialist. Thirty five of my years as an educator were spent at the middle and high school levels working with adolescents and teenagers.

I strongly support the passage of Harter's Law (hb 7431) because, as a veteran educator I have seen thousands of students throughout the years, and throughout those years I have seen many students struggle with mental health issues, identity, family, bullying, social media, and trauma caused by abuse and neglect. Many students struggle alone with their trauma out of fear of retribution from the abuser and/or not being believed if they report it. Child abuse and neglect is a trauma that lives with a person forever. Children being abused by a parent, guardian, or other "trusted" adult in their lives often struggle with mental health, substance abuse, depression, and suicide. I have seen first hand what this can do to children. Many leave (quit) school, are truant, become withdrawn, and fail in school, which affects their future adult life and ability to be productive, successful, contributing members of our society.

As teachers, we often do not know what our students go home to. Yet, we are considered mandatory reporters if we suspect abuse or neglect. Why? Because many students do not, will not, or can not speak out for themselves. The fear and anxiety children experience can be so severe that they do not speak out or self report. They fear retribution and further abuse. This fear and trauma stays with them for years. Then when a child finally does come forward it may be too late to see justice done because a statute of limitations has expired. This further discourages children from coming forward. Living with the abuse, the trauma, and then the betrayal of the system for denying justice is simply unacceptable, and now this R.I. legislature has the opportunity to help make justice a reality for so many who were abused as children. I urge everyone (if you have not already) to read David Harter Finch's book *Here There Be Monsters* before voting on this bill. For David and Lisa, who have lost their other sister to overdose, this trauma lives on and they will never see justice for themselves. Knowing one of their abusers still lives right here in R.I. is excruciating and frustrating. Yet, they relive the trauma and tell their story because they do not want other children of abuse to endure this suffering without seeking, and getting, justice.

Please vote in favor of passing HB 7431

Thank you  
Sincerely,  
Angela Boisclair, retired N.K. Educator  
37 Blackrock Rd.  
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