

April 24, 2025

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley
Chair, RI House Committee on State Government and Elections
RI State House of Representatives
By Email To: HouseStateGovernmentandElections@rilegislature.gov

Re: **Support** for H-6165 and H-6188 (Purple Alert)

Dear Chairman Shanley:

We write in **support** of Rhode Island following the lead of many other states to create a “Purple Alert” system to allow police to alert the public when vulnerable adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) are missing, similar to current Amber Alert (for missing children) and Silver Alert (for missing seniors with dementia). Time is truly of the essence in these situations, and the concerns for vulnerable adults with I/DD are similar as those for other populations with alert systems in place. When Linda Dalomba was missing for a few days earlier this year, the police were not able to use existing alert systems because she did not fit into the silver or amber alert categories.

RIPIN is a peer-led nonprofit that helps thousands of Rhode Islanders annually access special education and health care. Most of our board and staff are themselves parents or caregivers to loved ones with disabilities. We operate several programs that work with Rhode Islanders with I/DD, and the Purple Alert system will support the community we serve.

RIPIN does not have any special technical expertise in state police warning systems, so it is hard to evaluate the differences between the two bills. Based on our review, we prefer the approach taken by H-6165 in a number of areas. For example, H-6188 excludes disabilities related to “substance abuse” in a worrying manner, especially since many conditions are co-occurring. The definitions in H-6165 strike a more appropriate balance, in our opinion. H-6188 is also named after Linda Dalomba, who is still alive. If this has not happened already, the committee should confirm with Linda and her loved ones that she’s comfortable with this before moving forward with that bill title.

Thank you for your consideration of these important proposals and our testimony. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if we can be helpful to the committee in any other way.

Sincerely,

/s/

Samuel Salganik, JD
Executive Director
Salganik@ripin.org

