

Kenneth J. Hopkins
Mayor



Colonel Michael J. Winquist
Chief of Police

"A Nationally Accredited Agency"

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The Honorable Representative Evan P. Shanley
Chair, House State Government and Elections
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

April 21, 2025

Re: ***Support for House Bill H-6188 entitled the Linda DeLomba Purple Alert Act***

Dear Chairman Shanley:

As the Chief of the Cranston Police Department, I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed Purple Alert legislation. House Bill H-6188 would establish a critical notification system for locating missing individuals with developmental, intellectual, or physical disabilities who are at risk.

Our community recently experienced a harrowing example of why such a tool is urgently needed. Ms. Linda DeLomba, a woman with severe developmental and physical disabilities, was missing for several days. The situation was deeply concerning, and while we used every available resource to locate her, the absence of a dedicated alert system like the proposed Purple Alert hampered our ability to disseminate information quickly and broadly to the public.

Rhode Island utilizes the Emergency Alert System for Amber and Silver Alerts, which have proven effective in mobilizing community support and ensuring swift action during emergencies. A Purple Alert would leverage this same infrastructure to help locate vulnerable individuals who do not meet the criteria for existing alerts but are equally at risk. This common-sense expansion of our existing public safety capabilities aligns with our duty to protect all residents, especially those most vulnerable.

Implementing a Purple Alert system would enhance coordination between law enforcement agencies, media outlets, and the public, significantly increasing the chances of safely locating individuals like Ms. DeLomba in a timely manner. I strongly urge the legislature to consider this initiative's real-life impact in saving lives and reuniting families.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and your continued commitment to the safety of all Rhode Islanders.

Should you have any questions, don't hesitate to get in touch with me at (401) 477-5001.

Respectfully,

Col. Michael J. Winquist

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Chief of Police
Cranston Police Department