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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 Evan P. Shanley, Chair of the House State Government and Elections Committee
Honorable Members of the House State Government and Elections Committee

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

Date: June 3, 2025

Re: Support for House Bill 6166

On behalf of our network of member agencies and SOAR, our taskforce of survivors, the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence appreciates this opportunity to express our **support for House Bill 6166**, which creates a new law to address the issue of sexual harassment involving those individuals that are actively involved in legislative business.

According to data collected in the [National Survey of State Legislators on Legislative Workplaces](#), one third of sitting state legislators have witnessed or experienced workplace sexual harassment. This bill clarifies the rights that all legislators have to a workplace free from harassment and enhances the disciplinary penalties and consequences for employees found to be in violation of these policies.

The purpose of the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV) is to eliminate domestic violence in Rhode Island. Our mission is to support and enhance the work of our member agencies and to provide leadership on the issue of domestic violence. The member agencies of the RICADV provide essential services to thousands of survivors of domestic violence and their children every year in Rhode Island. These services help survivors build resilience and find safety after experiencing abuse. We also educate and raise awareness about intimate partner violence to further prevention of abuse and stop it before it starts.

Like intimate partner violence, sexual harassment in any form has no place in the workplace or in society. As another harmful form of gender-based oppression, sexual harassment is a type of abusive power that can go unchecked when there are no safeguards in place to deter it or hold those who cause harm accountable. The consequences of inaction around sexual harassment harm women and widen the gender gap in political power, including in Rhode Island, where our state legislature is disproportionately male.

For the adoption of critical safeguards and toward enhanced safety and equity, we strongly urge the Committee to **support H. 6166**.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.