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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: Senator Matthew LaMountain, Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee  
Honorable Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

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

Date: March 10, 2026

**Re: Concerns Regarding Senate Bill 2161 as Written; Request for Amendments**

On behalf of our network of member agencies and SOAR, our taskforce of survivors, the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV) appreciates this opportunity to **request specific amendments in a Sub A to Senate Bill 2161 that would allow the RICADV to support this legislation.** We would respectfully request exemption and carve-out language for *all* domestic violence offenses that will allow the court some discretion to provide for the safety of a domestic abuse survivor when a probation violation involves a domestic violence related offense, including the violation of a protective order.

We request the following language on page 1, line 16 of the bill: **“When the provisions of the Domestic Violence Prevention Act, chapter 29 of title 12 are applicable in the alleged probation violation, the court may order the defendant held without bail for a period not exceeding ten (10) days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.”**

This language is specific and includes all enumerated domestic offenses in RIGL 12-29-2. This bill should include exemption language that contains all the domestic offenses in RIGL 12-29-2 in the determination of bail conditions.

Survivor safety is critical, and allowing the court some discretion when the offense may indicate dangerous escalation to lethality is particularly important. In our recent publication, the [2016-2020 RI Domestic Violence Homicides report](#), on page 4, we concluded: *“Just over half of the perpetrators had previous involvement in domestic violence-related judicial proceedings. Fifty-five percent (12) of the perpetrators were or had been subject to a civil domestic violence restraining order, and 45% (10) of the perpetrators had previously been convicted or pled nolo contendere in a domestic violence case.”* Although about half of the DV homicide perpetrators in the five-year report had prior DV criminal histories, about half of them had *no prior* DV history in their record. Since a potentially deadly case of intimate partner violence could take place without a documented track record in the system, our position is that *domestic violence offense exemption language* is important in this bill for the court's discretion on danger and risk assessment, and necessary for survivor safety.

Page 9 of the same DV Homicide report also highlights research indicating that the period of time immediately after a survivor takes steps to end the abusive relationship, report abuse, or leave the abusive partner is uniquely dangerous: “The time after a victim ends an abusive relationship can be one of the most dangerous periods. Perpetrators of domestic violence will often escalate their tactics of abuse as they start to lose control over the victim.” The discretion of a court to remove a violent abusive partner from the victim for a matter of even a few days could give the victim time to safely flee, relocate to safe housing, and access the needed support, advocacy, and resources to remain safe. These couple of days can sometimes be the difference between life or death for survivors.

**With the inclusion of these amendments pertaining to a specific and clear domestic violence offense carve-out when considering bail conditions of probation violations, the RICADV would then be able to support this important bail reform bill.**