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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 L. LaMountain, Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee
Honorable Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

From: Lucy Rios, Executive Director
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Date: March 10, 2026

Re: **Support for Senate Bills 2290, 2299, 2313, and 2983**

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 express **our support regarding Senate Bills 2290, 2299, 2313, and 2983**. These bills would make the following critical updates to the bail and expungement processes in RI:

- S. 2290: Provides for release of misdemeanor arrestees without financial conditions, except for domestic violence or flight risk or obstruction of justice risk.
- S. 2299: Allows expungement of multiple felony convictions for non-violent felonies 10 years after sentence completed.
- S. 2313: Reduces the time for expungements to 3 years for a single misdemeanor and 5 years for felonies and multiple misdemeanors.
- S. 2983: Permits the expungement of records 5 years after the imposition of sentence for misdemeanors and 10 years after the imposition of sentence for felonies; if the sentence is greater than 10 years, then upon successful completion of the sentence.

We appreciate that the sponsor has taken into consideration the unique survivor safety risks that are present as we strive toward building more equitable justice responses by exempting the domestic violence crimes from these proposed changes. As we know, the overwhelming majority of incarcerated women have experienced domestic or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime.¹ Experiencing abuse is a pipeline to incarceration as survivors are trapped in conditions that leave them without stable access to housing, job security, social connections, mental and physical health, and other protective factors. As a result, **promoting survivor justice requires building systems that provide support and resources to communities impacted by incarceration.**

Many folks with criminal records experience difficulties in finding housing and employment, perpetuating the negative cycle of limited access to basic survival and safety resources. This can have fatal consequences for survivors of domestic violence, for whom the likelihood of experiencing physical abuse or homicide increases greatly when their abuser is unemployed.² Survivors are also at an increased risk of experiencing domestic violence when they are unemployed themselves, as their vulnerable economic position can make it easier for their abuser to assert power and control.²

The changes proposed by these bills recognize that all our communities, including domestic violence survivors, benefit from systems that balance accountability and fairness. Prolonged penalties for non-domestic violence related crimes do more to put our communities at risk of continued violence than to protect them. Thank you for your consideration. **We urge your support of Senate Bills 2290, 2299, 2313, and 2983.**

¹ Shannon M. Lynch et al., Women's Pathways to Jail: The Roles and Intersections of Serious Mental Illness and Trauma (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2012), 32

² Sonia Bhalotra, Diogo G C Britto, Paolo Pinotti, Breno Sampaio: Job Displacement, Unemployment Benefits and Domestic Violence, *The Review of Economic Studies*, 2025; rda004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/restud/rda004>