



May 15, 2024

Chairman Marvin Abney
House of Representatives Finance Committee
Room 35, State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: 2024- H8002

Dear Chairman Abney:

On behalf of Day One, we are presenting testimony in support of H8002 “Joint Resolution – Making An Appropriation of \$500,000 to Day One, Rhode Island’s Sexual Assault Coalition and Rape Crisis Center.” This appropriation is essential to ensure that survivors of sexual assault in Rhode Island receive the support, advocacy, and resources they need to heal and thrive.

For over 50 years, Day One has been dedicated to providing comprehensive treatment, intervention, education, advocacy, and prevention services to Rhode Islanders of all ages - from preschool children to elder adults. Day One is not just an organization; it is a beacon of hope and support for survivors of sexual assault in Rhode Island.

Our inclusive and accessible services ensure that survivors receive the support they need in a safe and nonjudgmental environment, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status. We strive to guide victims into survivors and obtain the justice they desire.

Sexual assault, harassment, and abuse happens in all communities. No one is immune. This is a pervasive issue that affects individuals nationwide, with young people experiencing disproportionately high rates of victimization.

One in six boys and one in four girls experience a sexual assault before the age of eighteen. In addition, one in five women and one in sixty-seven men will be raped at some point in their lives. Sexual abuse prevention and trauma-informed support must be a priority.

The impact of Day One's work cannot be overstated. From raising awareness and advocating for legislative change to fostering a safer and more compassionate community, Day One has been instrumental in addressing sexual violence in Rhode Island.

As an organization, we are deeply concerned about the potential loss of services to victims in need throughout the state due to cuts in federal subsidies including the decimation of Victims of



Crime Act (VOCA) funds. Day One relies heavily on government grants, private donations, and community support to sustain its critical services and programs. The appropriation of \$500,000 to Day One would bolster its efforts in supporting survivors and combating sexual violence statewide, ensuring that no survivor is left without the resources they need to heal and seek justice. The needs of our clients are paramount; and we never want to turn victims away, reduce staff, or close programs due to drastic cuts in funding.

After 50 years, Day One remains dedicated to empowering survivors, promoting consent and respect, and challenging the systems and attitudes that perpetuate sexual violence. We urge you to support this Joint Resolution and stand with survivors of sexual assault in Rhode Island. By investing in Day One, we are investing in the safety, well-being, and dignity of our community members. In doing so, we can ensure that children and adult survivors of sexual assault in Rhode Island receive the support and resources they need to heal.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Peg Langhammer'.

Peg Langhammer
Executive Director