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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 Marvin Abney, Chair of the House Finance Committee
Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee

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

Date: March 4, 2025

Re: **Support for House Bill 5076 Article 10, Chapter 24**

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 **support Article 10, Chapter 24 in the Governor's proposed budget.** The Rhode Island Baby Bond Trust Act is a guaranteed inheritance program that would increase equity and opportunity for children and families living in deep poverty. This trust would provide children born to parents participating in the RI Works program with a \$3,000 investment at birth that would yield around \$12,000 for the child to use at age 18 for wealth-building assets.

By establishing a baby bond trust program, joining a growing number of states investing in this benefit, Rhode Island has an opportunity to significantly reduce racial wealth disparities and break cycles of poverty in our state. Through this strategic investment, our state makes a strong commitment to families living in deep poverty - promoting economic mobility and reducing financial stress for young adults at a critical moment in their lives.

Beyond improvements to economic justice and mobility for children born into deep poverty, this program also offers promise as a prevention strategy to reduce intimate-partner violence among young adults. Early adulthood brings heightened risk for experiencing violence. According to the CDC, risk factors for experiencing intimate-partner violence include "age (adolescence and young adulthood), low income, low educational attainment, and unemployment."¹ Women ages 18-24 are at the highest risk of experiencing intimate-partner violence.² Access to economic supports is a major protective factor against experiencing violence, especially during this high-risk developmental period. Providing young people with financial resources can reduce stress and improve professional and educational opportunities associated with greater health and safety.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. **We urge you to support the Rhode Island Baby Bond Trust Act and make tangible steps toward improving economic health and justice for Rhode Islanders.**

¹ Niolon, P. H., Kearns, M., Dills, J., Rambo, K., Irving, S., Armstead, T., & Gilbert, L. (2017) Intimate Partner Violence Prevention Resource for Action. Atlanta, GA: Division of Violence Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/violence-prevention/media/pdf/resources-for-action/IPV-Prevention-Resource_508.pdf

² Black, M.C., Basile, K.C., Breiding, M.J., Smith, S.G., Walters, M.L., Merrick, M.T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M.R. (2011). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/NISVS_Report2010-a.pdf