

**January 19, 2024**

**Dear Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and Members of the Judiciary Committee,**

**My name is Kathleen Paradis, and I am the Education and Outreach Manager at the Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Center. I respectfully express my wholehearted support for LD 2084, an Act to Provide Funding for Essential Services for Victims of Crimes. Over the last 15 years, I have witnessed the transformative impact of dedicated support services on survivors' lives and their pursuit of justice.**

**LD 2084 represents a significant step toward addressing the needs of victims by allocating funding to essential services. Services such as supporting a victim who has been tortured and brutally sexually assaulted, like the victim we met this month at the hospital. She was severely injured and still in shock.**

**Our advocate sat with her and medical providers for hours while they x-rayed and documented her injuries. There was nobody else there to support her. She would have been alone had it not been for our advocate. She also had nowhere to go after she was released, so our advocate was able to check her safely into a hotel for the night until a plan was in place. Moving forward, we can also assist her in getting a Protection from Abuse Order and therapy, and she has access to our ongoing support groups.**

**Sexual violence is a public health crisis that affects individuals across our communities. With 1 in 5 people experiencing sexual violence in their lifetime, this funding is critical for children and adults who are survivors.**

**Sexual assault prevention and support services are not only vital for the individual survivor but also contribute to the overall well-being of our communities. Investing in these services speaks volumes to survivors that deserve to be heard, believed, and supported.**

**I appreciate your consideration of the well-being of our community and the impact LD 2084 can have on the lives of survivors. I am hopeful that, with your support, we can strengthen our commitment to justice and support for victims of crimes.**

**Thank you for your time!  
Sincerely,  
Kathleen Paradis**