

Sarah Dodge
Finding our voices
LD 1684

My name is Sarah Dodge, 24 year domestic abuse survivor and I am writing today in memory of Virginia Cookson. I did not know Virginia personally, but she is all of us women who have suffered at the hands of someone who was supposed to love & protect us, only Virginia isn't here today to stand up for the rights of other women because she was murdered by her boyfriend Richard Thorpe who had been let out of prison early into the community confinement monitoring program. Richard Thorpe never should have been let out of prison 3 years before his sentence was finished due to the severity of the crime that he was incarcerated for, nearly killing his ex wife Darcia Thorpe. I took a closer look into Virginia's case, and became aware that there was no confinement or monitoring of Richard Thorpe after he was set free, and it baffles me that his victim Darcia Thorpe was not notified that the man that brutally beat her and nearly killed her was not notified of his integration back into the community. Virginia Cookson was an innocent and unsuspecting victim of Richard. He won her over with his charming ways and pretty soon had made his way into her home, after a few months of dating, and fell victim to his abuse she tried to break it off and he wasn't having that. He threatened to kill her and her family even called in on him reporting his threats and STILL nothing was done. Richard returned and strangled her doing exactly what he said he was going to do. Where was Virginia's protection? I am outraged at the negligence! I am writing in strong favor of supporting LDI684 an act to exclude from eligibility for a community confinement program for a person serving time for domestic violence felonies. We need to do much better at protecting our women & children. Please don't let Virginia Cookson's life be forgotten. I am begging you as a domestic violence abuse survivor who was to scared to leave for fear of getting murdered please pass this bill. Respectfully, Sarah Dodge