



FARMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
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Kenneth A. Charles - Chief of Police



Testimony of Kenneth Charles
In Support of LD 875, An Act to Fund Essential Services for Victims of Domestic Violence
Wednesday, March 19th, 2025

Senator Ingwersen, Representatives Meyers, and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Ken Charles, and I am the Chief of Police for Farmington Police Department. I am writing to urge you to invest in the critical lifesaving services of Maine's network of Domestic Violence Resource Centers.

The value of these services is measured with each report of domestic violence and the uncounted number of unreported incidents. Law enforcement collaborates with Safe Voices to provide trauma informed support to survivors at critical times in the disclosure process, investigation, and post incident recovery. Other activities include school offerings that provide safety training and promote equity and respect among students. Safe Voices provides a variety of survivor supports and even intervention programs to influence the behaviors of perpetrators. This illustrates just a few of the critically important programs offered by Safe Voices, and the network of Domestic Violence Resource Centers.

I have personally worked with Safe Voices for over 25 years. During that time, I have admired the ability of their organization to adapt to the unique needs of its clients and our understanding of the problem of domestic violence. Further, I applaud their efforts to provide emergency shelter for victims and their dependents.

Collaboration between law enforcement and domestic violence advocates is essential to ensuring the safety and well-being of survivors and our community. By working together, law enforcement receives valuable training and insights from advocates on trauma-informed responses, helping to reduce re-traumatization and increase trust in the justice system. Advocates also provide survivors with crucial support, such as safety planning, shelter, and legal assistance, which complement the protective role of law enforcement. This partnership fosters a coordinated community response that enhances victim safety, improves case outcomes, and ultimately helps break the cycle of abuse.

Law enforcement officers rely on domestic violence advocates to provide essential support and resources when investigating DV crimes. Advocates help bridge the gap between survivors and the criminal justice system by offering emotional support, safety planning, and guidance on legal rights, which encourages survivors to participate in investigations and court proceedings. By working alongside advocates, law enforcement can build stronger cases, ensure survivor-centered approaches, and create a more effective and compassionate response to domestic violence.

"To create a feeling of safety for the people within the Town of Farmington"

It cannot be understated that the collaboration of Law Enforcement and Advocates is essential. We cannot effectively address domestic violence without the support of our local advocates, who provide critical services that go beyond the scope of policing. The wellbeing of our citizens depends on ongoing access to these services and that is why I urge you to provide this critical funding.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth Charles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kenneth Charles
Chief of Police