

April 22, 2024

The Honorable Patrick Mullaney  
1550 Franklin Ave.  
Mineola, NY 11501

Re: Economic Justice and Domestic Violence

Dear Assembly Member Mullaney:

Our names are Renee Sitt, Amanda Misra, Meghan Hoschander, Melissa Smith, and Caitlin Burke. We are social work students at Adelphi University, which resides in your district. As social work students, we are committed to advocating for social justice issues, especially economic justice.

There is a widespread issue of domestic violence that many members of our school and community suffer from that needs to be addressed. Domestic violence can manifest itself in various ways, such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, and emotional abuse. Domestic violence can occur in many different situations and amongst all social, religious, and cultural groups (Aldridge, 2021). Although it predominantly affects women, regardless of their demographics (Aldridge, 2021). Many victims who suffer from abuse lack the emotional support they need to escape their abusers. However, a significant problem among victims of domestic violence is the lack of financial stability needed to leave their abuser (Aldridge, 2021). Too often, this binds them long-term and forces them to stay in an abusive relationship.

“Financial impediments, in particular, play a major role in restricting the freedoms enjoyed by women who are abused by their intimate partners” (Conner, 2013). Many victims’ finances are controlled by their abusers, which leaves them with little or no financial freedom. Additionally, “financial instability is one of the greatest reasons why, after gaining freedom, a woman who experiences battering has limited choices and may ultimately acquiesce to her partner’s attempts to reconcile” (Conner, 2013). While some victims show immense courage by leaving their abuser, financial instability unfortunately pushes them back in an abusive relationship to survive.

We must take a stand against domestic violence and address financial instability in our community. We are calling on you as a public servant to stand up victims of domestic violence and help them with their plight. The victims need sufficient logistical resources to be able to support themselves and their families to leave their abusers. Victims need access to housing programs and financial aid, so they can build their own home, free from violence. Please consider our request and help the people who are hurt the most.

## References

- Aldridge, J. (2021). "Not an either/or situation": The minimization of violence against women In United Kingdom "domestic abuse" policy. *Violence Against Women*, 27(11), 1823-1839.
- Conner, D. H. (2013). Financial freedom: Women, money, and domestic abuse. *Wm. & Mary J. Women & L.*, 20, 339.