



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

JAY D. LIVINGSTONE
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

8TH SUFFOLK DISTRICT

Committees:
Vice Chair, Public Service
Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure
Municipalities and Regional Government
Post Audit and Oversight

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August 2, 2021

Hon. Josh Cutler, House Chair
Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development
State House, Room 167
Boston, MA, 02133

Hon. Patricia Jehlen, Senate Chair
Joint Committee on Labor and Workforce Development
State House, Room 424
Boston, MA, 02133

Re: H2018 An Act relative to employment protections for victims of abusive behavior

Dear Chair Cutler and Chair Jehlen,

I write to you regarding a bill to prevent employment discrimination that domestic abuse survivors face: H2018 *An Act relative to employment protections for victims of abusive behavior*.

Studies conducted have shown that 30 percent of these victims lose their jobs because of the domestic violence they faced. This is often due to the fact that employers are unwilling to provide reasonable accommodations to protect them from their abusers while in the workplace whether it be providing an extra day off to attend a court hearing or changing an employee's number. This results in an individual having to choose between their job and their safety.

This bill strengthens existing employment nondiscrimination by adding status as a victim of abusive behavior to the list of protected categories. It also would require that employees provide accommodation to and not discriminate against hiring employees who are victims of abusive behavior or who have family members who are victims of abusive behavior, if proof is provided.

When an individual has experienced domestic violence the last thing that one should have to worry about is keeping their job. I believe that this is an important step to protecting abuse survivors. I hope that the committee will report the bill out favorably.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay Livingstone".

Jay Livingstone
State Representative
8th Suffolk District