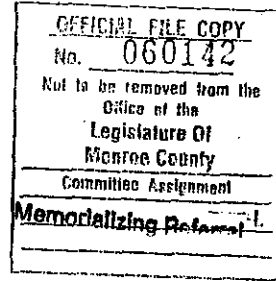




Monroe County Legislature

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April 10, 2006

To The Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
39 West Main Street
Rochester, New York 14614

Re: **Memorializing the NYS Legislature to Pass A.4776 and S.3761 to support Domestic Violence Victim's Entitlement to Unpaid Leave of Absence**

According to UNICEF, between 40-50% of the world female population will become victims of domestic violence. Victims are advised to report their abusers to authorities in order to stop these tragic situations. Often times, however, the possibilities of homelessness, discrimination, and job loss deter victims from reporting abuse. The US Department of Justice reports that only about half of all acts of domestic violence are reported; and only one in five victims will seek medical treatment for their physical injuries. During the six months following an act of domestic violence, 32% of victims will be victimized again.

State bills A.4776 and S.3761, both currently before the Labor Committees in the New York State Senate and Assembly, encourage domestic violence victims to report crimes and get their lives back. This legislation's goal is to secure the right of victims of domestic violence to obtain legal, medical, and psychological assistance during a position of full-time employment to resolve their situations of abuse.

These proposals will amend labor law to include Article 19-C, titled "Unpaid Leave of Absence for Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence." This amendment will make domestic violence victims eligible for an additional ninety days of leave from their employment during a twelve month period to work through the problems that result from the domestic or sexual violence. The victim's right to privacy and job security will be upheld through this legislation, with the hopes of encouraging all victims to report the crime. Financial independence and stable employment are two key factors needed by victims to remove themselves from their abusive environments. If either one of these needs are not entirely met, victim's are less likely get help.

Therefore, we ask you to join us in urging the New York State Legislature to promptly pass Bill A.4776 and Bill S.3761, to help reinforce the effort towards creating state-wide awareness and a supportive atmosphere in which victims will feel safe to come forward.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla M. Palumbo *Carrie M. Andrews* *Edward M. O'Brien*
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