



**Representative Janine Boyd  
9<sup>th</sup> House District**

Governor Mike DeWine

Director Dr. Amy Acton  
Ohio Department of Health

Director Kimberly Hall  
Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services

Dave Yost  
Attorney General for the State of Ohio

April 21, 2020

**RE: Support for Domestic Violence shelters during COVID-19**

Dear Governor DeWine, Directors Acton and Hall, and Attorney General Yost:

First, thank you again for your continued leadership and all of your diligent work.

It is my intention with this letter to share with you feedback from my conversations with the Ohio Domestic Violence Network concerning the need to address three urgent matters during the COVID-19 pandemic. As you are aware, domestic violence remains an existing public health crisis. We know that as stay-home and stop-mass-gathering-orders have taken effect, victims of domestic violence have not only been faced with surviving a global pandemic, but also surviving escalated intimate partner violence at home. Leaving a potentially lethal relationship has never been more dangerous, that's why we need to support survivors and shelters to the best of our ability.

1. **Declaring domestic violence shelter workers as *essential workers*** for the purpose of becoming eligible to receive child care under the new Temporary Pandemic Child Care License requirements and also become eligible for other benefits associated with being a designated essential worker. It has been relayed to me that domestic violence shelters are seeing an increase in the number of clients they are serving as well as phone calls for help, at their facilities. With the number of clients served on the rise, we need to ensure that these facilities are fully staffed. To retain employees they need to have security in knowing the State of Ohio is supporting them during this time so they can work and provide lifesaving services to those seeking shelter.

2. **Providing shelters with PPE.** Employees at domestic violence shelters are at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 because of their direct interaction with victims and possibly with other partners, such as law enforcement and medical professionals. These interactions are vital functions of their job. Thus, they are not always able to follow the social distancing rules put in place.

3. **Include resources and information about the State's Domestic Violence programs on the COVID-19 website.** As a caucus we are grateful Governor DeWine has highlighted national Domestic Violence resources in previous press conferences. However, it is vital we also connect victims with local resources during this national pandemic.

Domestic violence shelters remain open because their mission is dedicated to providing a way out of danger and safe shelter to victims of domestic violence. I urge you to include domestic violence workers as essential service provider in rule 5101:2-12-02.1. I also urge you to work to ensure PPE is provided to our domestic violence workers to ensure their safety, and of course to prevent further community spread and protect our state.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter, and many thanks to your staff who continue to be engaged and responsive during this uncertain time. I look forward to hearing from you on this issue and I am open to drafting any necessary related legislation, if that is your recommendation.

Yours in Service,



Janine Boyd  
Ohio House District 09



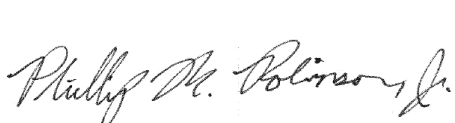
Emilia Sykes  
Minority Leader  
House District 34



Kristin Boggs  
Assistant Minority Leader  
House District 18



Richard D. Brown  
Assistant Minority Whip  
House District 20



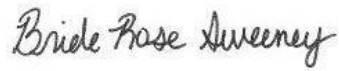
Phil Robinson  
House District 06



Kent Smith  
House District 08



Terrence Upchurch  
House District 10



Bride Rose Sweeney  
House District 14



Jeff Crossman  
House District 15



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