



September 13, 2021

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I am writing to express the support of the Justice Resource Institute (JRI) for the nomination of Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins for the position of United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts.

JRI provides services and supports for at-risk, vulnerable, and otherwise underserved families and individuals. Our range of services includes children of all ages, as well as adults with developmental disabilities. You can see all our programs at www.jri.org In Suffolk county, we have been gratified to have the support and partnership of Ms. Rollins and her office in multiple ways, including several programs with a direct link to her work as DA.

JRI's Boston STRIVE program serves returning citizens who are eager to become wage-earning, tax-paying contributors to society. Ms. Rollins knows that effective crime prevention includes both prosecution of offenders, and providing former offenders—if they are willing and engaged—with the opportunity for rehabilitation. This approach is supported both by the evidence, and by a moral and ethical imperative that I think few would argue with. Ms. Rollins—certainly tough on serious offenders—is equally tenacious when it comes to acting to protect vulnerable citizens whose relatively minor offenses are more effectively dealt with by social supports, including agencies like ours.

JRI's Boston Trauma Response Team provides rapid crisis response to homicides affecting young people (13-24), short-term case management, coping groups, and follow-up psychological first aid services. The team consists of well-trained professionals and volunteers who are called on by community members, leaders, or emergency personnel to provide support to emotionally traumatized youth and their families



on a 24-hour, 365-day-a-year basis. Staff and volunteers have the ability to respond to the emergency within 30 minutes of the time called to the Boston community. In an effort to develop resiliency and to provide support following a traumatic event, JRI provides several models of intervention for immediate and ongoing support to those impacted by violence. Once again, having a DA who is focused on ripple effects of community violence, including both prosecution and support of victims and families, has been essential to our work

I could go to list a number of other programs, but suffice to say that the prospect of losing Ms. Rollins as a partner in our work would worry us, were it not for the fact that as US Attorney, she will have the chance to apply her exceptional skills in a broader arena. We will benefit from her presence in this new role.

I would like to add that I have seen some comment that the comprehensive approach DA Rollins has taken toward crime is somehow weak or ineffective. Nothing could be further from the truth. DA Rollins is willing to face the facts of racial disparities in enforcement, to acknowledge that communities of color have historically been marginalized. By doing so, she builds trust. And by actively pursuing serious offenders, she demonstrates strength and a commitment to justice that allows her entire community—including people of **all** backgrounds—to know that she is on our side.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you should have any questions.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Pond".

Andy Pond, LICSW
President and CEO
(apond@jri.org)