



## Transforming Society's Response to Homicide.

September 16, 2021

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin, Chairman  
The Honorable Charles E. Grassley, Ranking Member  
US Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Office #224 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

It is an honor and a pleasure to offer a recommendation on behalf of our District Attorney Rachael Rollins for the position of United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts. I am writing this letter of support from both a personal and professional perspective. I am the mother of fifteen years young Louis D. Brown, an innocent bystander who was shot and killed in crossfire in December of 1993. Secondly, I am writing as the President and CEO of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. The mission of the Peace Institute is to serve as a center of healing, teaching and learning for families and community impacted by murder trauma grief and loss.

We offer DA Rollins high praise for the way that she has conducted business in the Suffolk County District Attorney's office. She has prioritized victims of the most serious crimes; holding perpetrators of such crimes accountable. She has been courageous and wise enough to not allocate limited resources on prosecuting low level crimes, yet advocating for adequate programming for low level offenders. Acknowledging the realization that many of them are from families of murdered victims who should have been helped at the initial intervention.

DA Rollins seeks to rightfully hold law enforcement to higher standards as she has also done with her own prosecutors. Directing them to work within the idea that people are to be treated impartially, fairly, properly, and reasonably by the law. This includes the families of those that are surviving the murder of a loved one.

We feel it is evident that DA Rollins operates within the actual intended meaning of "Justice," that laws are to ensure that no harm befalls another, and that where harm is alleged, both the accuser and the accused receive a morally right consequence merited by their actions. She has boldly enacted the Conviction Integrity Review Unit which is charged with investigating certain claims of wrongful convictions, and where warranted, undoing the harm that has been done, all in the rightful interest of "Justice". She will bring an undaunted and courageous personality to the role of US Attorney representing Massachusetts.

As a Non-profit organization operating in the city of Boston for over twenty-five years, we have been of service to both homicide victims and the accused. We have worked closely with different District Attorneys in the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office and we feel uniquely qualified to make this important recommendation.

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We are confident that DA Rachael Rollins will be a great US Attorney for the state of Massachusetts. We hope and even expect that she will be confirmed.

Here are just a few examples of our work and the outcome:

Last year one of the ADA wanted to prosecute a young man who had relocated to Florida as part of a deal which included 3 years of probation. There were some conflicts with the deal so the ADA wanted to have the young man returned and prosecuted.

However, the young man was living in Florida for almost a year and thriving. By removing him from his environment in Boston it gave him the opportunity to start over. He found a job, started going to barber school, and with the help from his parents started the process of purchasing a home. He also removed his younger brother and his friend's nephew from Boston who were on the verge of also making the same mistakes that he did. He found the kids jobs, helped them get their driving permits thus teaching them responsibility and accountability while starting their healing process.

Returning the young man to Boston and prosecuting him would have been detrimental not only to him but also to the younger kids. It made no sense to imprison him after a transformation. The Peace Institute met with DA Rollins and vouched for the young man. DA Rollins agreed to leave him in Florida to finish out his probation where he is still doing well. This is just an example of her commitment to humanity and our community. Her decision to leave him there interrupted the possibility of creating new victims.

Second example: One of my staff member's sons was murdered over 20 years ago. He had an adverse experience with the Criminal Justice System that resulted in his incarceration; When the situation was brought to the attention of DA Rollins, she graciously heard the claim of injustice and expeditiously directed her Conviction Integrity Review Unit to launch an investigation to ascertain "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" in keeping with the ideals of justice-doing what is right not merely settling for what is wrong at the expense of someone's wrongful imprisonment.

Finally, as the founder of the Peace Institute I am also a client. The man convicted of killing my son in the streets of Dorchester in 1993 was one of the shooters during a so called gang rival shootout is now on parole for life after serving fifteen years. This case was not tried fairly from the beginning and now it's under the integrity unit for review. While I am not opposing this process, DA Rollins is also committed to making sure that it does not end there. She is committed to leaving no stone unturned to find justice for my family.

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We work very closely with the Victim Witness Assistance Program of the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office in making sure that victims and survivors are kept informed in a manner that is effective and equitable. Under DA Rollins leadership her team has continued to build capacity to serve survivors of homicide victims to make sure that an advocate and an assistant DA is assigned to their case even if a suspect has not been apprehended. The Victim Witness Advocates are also a part of the Serving Survivors of Homicides Victims Providers network.

Under her leadership the Suffolk County District Attorney's office has increased the engagement of their Annual Survivors of Homicide Victims Awareness Month Breakfast; in 2019 there were over 200 survivors of homicide victims and partners in attendance. It was a standing room only and this shows her commitment to the families who are left behind after a homicide. DA Rollins makes herself available and connects with not only those in power but also makes sure that she speaks with those of us who are directly impacted. Her commitment to families is truly one that I have not seen expressed by any other DA. When there is a police involved shooting, DA Rollins office makes sure that the victim's family is connected to the Survivors Outreach Services Coordinator of the Peace Institute to make sure that the family is treated with dignity and compassion; ensuring that they can bury their loved one with dignity and compassion; benefiting from all available resources.

Our work at the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute is survivor centered and offender sensitive; we are an integral partner with the Suffolk County District Attorney's office. I am not only the President and CEO, I am a resident, a registered voter, and mother of a murder victim. My team and I thank you for your consideration of this letter in support and confirmation of DA Rollins' nomination.

In Peace and in Service

Chaplain Clementina M. Chery  
President and CEO