



The following is a list of legislation that JDI strongly supports in the current legislative session. This will be updated over time and does not necessarily represent all bills that JDI may support.

Education and Prevention

An Act Relative to Safe Schools ([H648/S286](#))

JDI believes that prevention education and supportive services, rather than policing, are what young survivors need in the school setting to promote healing. This bill will provide transition grants to police-free schools for the implementation of holistic school health and safety practices.

Lead sponsors: Rep. Kay Khan & Sen. Harriette Chandler

Racial Justice

An Act Establishing a Jail and Prison Construction Moratorium ([H1905/S2030](#))

Massachusetts continues to increase spending on incarceration even though the number of people in prisons and jails has decreased. This bill will pause the construction of any new prisons or jails in Massachusetts for 5 years, giving the Commonwealth an opportunity to shift spending priorities to invest in communities. Our local communities hold the knowledge to create sustainable solutions that address the root causes of incarceration.

Lead sponsors: Rep. Chyna Tyler & Sen. Joanne Comerford

Economic Justice

An Act to Lift Kids out of Deep Poverty ([S96/H199](#))

“Deep poverty” is income below half the federal poverty level - \$915/month for a family of three. This bill raises cash assistance to 50% of the federal poverty level. The economic impact of surviving abuse is significant, and this bill is one step towards supporting those most impacted by poverty –including survivors – to meet their basic needs.

Lead sponsors: Sen. Sal DiDomenico & Rep. Marjorie Decker

An Act Providing Affordable and Accessible High Quality Early Education and Care to Promote Child Development and Well-being and Support the Economy in the Commonwealth ([H605/S362](#))

Creating access to free or affordable childcare will facilitate economic stability by removing what is a heavy financial burden for many families and may open up additional employment opportunities for caregivers. This bill creates a universal system of affordable, high-quality early education and childcare for ages birth through age five and after school time for children ages 5-12.

Lead sponsors: Reps. Kenneth Gordon and Adrian Madaro & Sen. Jason Lewis

An Act Promoting Housing Opportunity and Mobility Through Eviction Sealing (HOMES Act) ([S921/H1808](#))

Access to housing is a critical issue that survivors face. An eviction record, regardless of its outcome, creates an additional barrier for survivors. The HOMES Act will offer relief to survivors by creating a pathway for record sealing.

Lead sponsors: Sen. Joseph A. Boncore & Rep. Michael J. Moran

An Act Relative to Employment Protections for Victims of Abusive Behavior ([H2018/S1173](#))

This bill would require employers to provide reasonable accommodations to an employee or prospective employee who is experiencing or has experienced abusive behavior, or whose family member is or has experienced abusive behavior. Having reasonable accommodations enables survivors to access safety and maintain stability during a tumultuous time.

Lead Sponsors: Reps. Jay Livingstone and Nika Elugardo & Sen. Cynthia Stone Creem

For more information contact Hema Sarang-Sieminski, Policy Director, Jane Doe Inc., hsarang-sieminski@janedoe.org

4/21/21

Jane Doe Inc., the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence advocates to improve access to services, resources, and justice for all communities. Our Coalition is comprised of 55 member sexual and/or domestic violence organizations located throughout the Commonwealth. JDI works with our members and community partners to eliminate conditions that enable sexual and domestic violence to occur and advance the cause of justice.

An Act Ensuring Domestic Violence Victims' Protections for all Employees in the Commonwealths ([H2023/S1023](#))

Having time off from work to access support and services is necessary to promote economic security for all survivors of SDV. This bill would extend employment domestic violence protections to contract workers in Massachusetts.

Lead sponsors: Reps Joseph McKenna & Sen. Ryan Fattman

An Act Relative to Inmate Telephone Calls ([S1599](#))

High-cost calls in prisons and jails take money away from communities most impacted by structural racism and violence. JDI firmly believes we need to invest in our communities right now. This bill would provide calls at no cost to all people in prison in Massachusetts. This is one small step towards supporting family and community wellbeing.

Lead sponsor: Senator Cynthia Stone Creem

An Act Relative to Fair Pay for Comparable Work ([S105/H237](#))

Salary benchmarks for employees in providing community-based services are constructed using outdated data that reinforces racial and gender inequities. This bill would eliminate the salary disparity between human services workers employed by community-based providers and state employees holding similar jobs.

Lead sponsors: Sen. Cindy Friedman & Rep. Kay Kahn

Human Rights

An Act Promoting Safety for Victims of Violent Crime and Human Trafficking ([H1818/S1093](#))

Immigrant survivors of SDV and other crimes have access to relief under immigration law. Currently, survivors in the Commonwealth face uncertainty and inconsistency when seeking U/T visa certifications, which require law enforcement confirmation of a survivor's participation in the investigation and/or prosecution of criminal activity. This bill sets a clear expectation for law enforcement and survivors regarding the issuance of these certifications.

Lead sponsors: Reps. Tram Nguyen and Patricia Haddad & Sen. Mark Montigny

An Act Relative to Work and Family Mobility During and Subsequent to the COVID-19 Emergency ([H3456/S2289](#))

Access to driver's licenses is a path to independence, a sense of security, and economic stability for survivors of SDV who are immigrants. This bill provides access to driver's licenses for all Massachusetts residents regardless of immigration status.

Lead sponsors: Reps. Tricia Farley-Bouvier and Christine Barber & Sen. Brendan Crighton

An Act Protecting LGBTQ Victims ([H1470/S956](#))

A survivor's gender identity and/or sexual orientation should never be used as a justification for another's violence. This bill bans the LGBTQ-panic defense, which uses a victim's sexual orientation or gender identity as a rationale for a defendant's violent actions.

Lead sponsor: Rep. Natalie Blais & Sen. Joanne Comerford

Access to Justice for Survivors

An Act Protecting Survivors of Rape and Their Children ([H1600/S997](#))

The needs of survivors of rape who conceive a child because of the rape must be centered in family court proceedings. This bill prohibits custody/visitation of a child conceived as a result of rape by the perpetrator; except when it is determined to be in the best interest of the child and the mother/survivors consents to visits.

Lead sponsors: Reps Carmine Gentile and Michelle Dubois & Sen. Sal DiDomenico

An Act to Improve Protections Relative to Domestic Violence ([H1643/S1112](#))

Coercive control, a tactic often used by people who cause harm, may be present in a domestic violence relationship. This bill defines coercive control and technology, adding these terms to the definition of abuse under Chapter 209A.

Lead sponsors: Reps. Natalie Higgins and Tram Nguyen & Sen. Michael Moore

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An Act to Strengthen Justice and Support for Sex Trade Survivors ([H1761/S940](#))

JDI recognizes and supports the dignity and wellbeing of sex workers. Too often survivors of sexual and domestic violence find themselves involved in the criminal justice system as defendants as a result of acts they engaged in in order to survive and cope with the violence and trauma. These bills offer a sensible first step approach to decriminalizing survival.

Lead sponsors: Reps. Elizabeth Malia and Mary Keefe & Sen. Harriette Chandler

An Act to Enhance the Rights of Crime Victims in the Commonwealth ([H1530/S989](#))

This bill takes important steps to update the Massachusetts Crime Victim's Bill of Rights. It will update definitions and ensure victims and survivors have ample opportunities to be heard and present should they choose to engage with the criminal justice system and to be informed throughout the process.

Lead sponsors: Rep. Marjorie Decker & Sen. Julian Cyr

Reproductive Justice

An Act to Ensure Compliance with the Anti-Shackling Law for Pregnant Incarcerated Women ([H2481/S1635](#))

86% of women in jails identify as survivors of sexual violence and/or domestic violence. This bill would ensure compliance with existing restrictions on the practice of shackling pregnant and/or post-partum incarcerated women. JDI supports this bill as part of our effort to decriminalize survivorship and shift our reliance on the criminal legal system.

Lead sponsors: Reps. Natalie Higgins and Tram Nguyen & Sen. Becca Rausch

An Act To Improve Access to Emergency Contraception ([H2264/S1372](#))

Barriers to accessing healthcare creates inequity. All people including survivors deserve access to timely medical care that meets their needs. This bill would ensure that everyone can access the emergency contraception that is right for them in a timely many and make insurance coverage possible for all forms of emergency contraception.

Lead sponsors: Rep. Marjorie Decker & Sen. Joseph A. Boncore

An Act Prohibiting Non-Consensual Pelvic Examinations ([H2267](#))

All persons should have the right to bodily autonomy. Performing a pelvic exam on a person who is unable to consent should be regarded as sexual assault. This bill would require written consent prior to performing a pelvic exam on an unconscious or anesthetized patient.

Lead sponsors: Reps. Mindy Domb and Kimberly N. Ferguson