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MOVA INCREASES SURVIVOR REPRESENTATION ON THE VICTIM & WITNESS ASSISTANCE BOARD

BOSTON, MA., October 5, 2023 -The Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) is proud to announce the appointment of members to the Victim and Witness Assistance Board (VWAB) by Governor Maura Healey. The new board composition includes the addition of two survivor members and an overall expanded and historically diverse VWAB.

MOVA prioritized increasing survivor representation beginning in 2021 as part of a [comprehensive strategic planning](#) process which details a commitment to ensuring the voices and experiences of survivors, particularly those who have historically been most marginalized, are at the forefront of their work.

“By adding more lived experiences and perspectives to the Board and centering survivor voices, our MOVA work and advocacy will be even more impactful,” said Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell. “I am grateful to the legislature, the VWAB and MOVA staff, Governor Healey, and the stakeholders who advocated for these important and essential changes.”

As a result of MOVA’s advocacy, the Massachusetts Legislature voted to expand the membership of the VWAB from five to seven members, include additional survivor representation, and ensure diversity amongst the membership is protected through [Chapter 24 of the Acts of 2021](#). The new law comes in recognition that marginalized populations need multi-cultural representation that values diversity and understands the racial inequities that many victims and survivors face each day.

“Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) are amongst those disproportionately impacted by violence in our state” said Liam Lowney, MOVA Executive Director. “We are grateful to Governor Healey for promoting a structure that not only elevates the voices of survivors but ensures that decision-making at MOVA is informed by BIPOC and survivor members of the victim services community.”

The VWAB is now comprised of Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell (chair), District Attorney Michael Morrissey, District Attorney Anthony Gulluni, survivor members Audrey Morrissey, Heather Bish, and Danielle Sicard, as well as public member Lavinia Weizel.

This historic change to the VWAB’s enacting statute codifies diversity and inclusivity in the future of victim services and ensures victims and survivors can have meaningful involvement and representation in advancing the rights of crime victims.

For more information on the VWAB, please visit our [website](#). More information pertaining to the new members will be shared across MOVA’s social media channels ([@massMOVA](#)) in the coming weeks.

MOVA is an independent state agency who strives to advance victim rights by ensuring all victims and survivors of crime across the Commonwealth are supported and empowered. MOVA operates under the guidance of the VWAB whom oversee MOVA's priorities, including administering state and federal funds for victims and survivors of crime across the Commonwealth through the Federal Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA).

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