MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Make it Easier for Victims of Domestic Violence to Carry
Proof of an Order of Protection
A.5040 Clark/ S.5935 Cleare

The New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) urges the New York State Legislature to pass this bill which would require New York State to develop a Hope Cards program, making it easier for victims of domestic violence to carry information about their final order of protection with them daily.

When a court issues an order of protection to a victim, the victim receives a paper copy of the order and is instructed to carry it with them at all times. Orders of protection contain all relevant information needed by victims to ensure the order is fully enforced; including information about the parties, specific restrictions or conditions of the order, length of the order, and more. Orders also serve as a searchable resource for law enforcement when violations occur.

Currently orders of protection are provided to victims as multiple full sheets of paper (8.5x11 inch). This is cumbersome for victims, especially when considering victims carry orders with them daily. Since orders of protection are provided in paper form, they experience everyday wear and tear; they are folded and unfolded, ripped, risk water damage, and fade over time. Victims can request new copies of their orders if damaged or destroyed but these requests take time, leaving victims without the proof they need that an order has been issued. Other victims choose to laminate their orders, but this can be cumbersome to have “on your person” at all times due to the size.

Hope cards are a solution. These small, wallet sized, laminated cards would contain all of the information needed to show an active order has been issued while making life a little easier for victims. Five states across the United States have already implemented Hope Card programs, alleviating some of the burden victims feel. This bill would require the Office of Court Administration to develop a Hope Cards program, require that Hope Cards be provided to victims at no cost, and allow victims to apply for Hope Cards via an online portal or in person when a final order is issued.

New York State must make it more convenient for victims to carry their order of protection by developing a Hope Cards program.

ABOUT NYSCADV:
Established in 1978, NYSCADV is designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as the information clearinghouse, primary point of contact, and resource center on domestic violence for the State of New York. NYSCADV is responsible for supporting the development of policies, protocol, and procedures to enhance domestic violence intervention and prevention and also provides education and technical assistance to the network of primary-purpose domestic violence service providers statewide.

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