

## Madalyn Letellier

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**From:** Jessica Brayden [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 4:25 PM  
**To:** Public Comments; All City Council  
**Cc:** All Clerk of Committee; Victoria Helberg  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for Ordinance Extending Paid Leave for Survivors  
**Attachments:** Letter of Support for Ordinance Extending Paid Leave for Survivors.docx

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Councilor Willie Burnley Jr., and the Somerville City Council,

I am pleased to inform you that we have attached the letter of support from RESPOND for the ordinance aiming to extend paid leave for survivors.

Please know that RESPOND extends its enthusiastic support for this initiative. We deeply appreciate your commitment to championing the rights of survivors in our community.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to this important cause.

Warm regards,

Jessica Brayden on behalf of Victoria Helberg, CEO

**Jessica Brayden**

Director of Strategic Development

*Pronouns: She, Her, Hers*

**RESPOND, Inc.**

*Working to end domestic violence!*

[REDACTED], Somerville, MA 02143  
[REDACTED]



[Schedule an appointment](#)



Dear Members of the Somerville City Council,

I am writing to request your consideration and support for an ordinance proposed by Councilor Willie Burnley Jr., which aims to extend additional paid leave to municipal employees who are survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, or violent crime.

As a representative of RESPOND, a domestic violence agency founded here in Somerville in 1974 and deeply committed to supporting survivors and fostering a community that prioritizes their well-being, we are enthusiastic about endorsing this important initiative. Councilor Burnley's proposal aligns closely with our mission to advocate for survivors and create systemic change to address their needs.

The proposed ordinance, as outlined by Councilor Burnley, reflects a comprehensive and compassionate approach to addressing the challenges faced by survivors. By providing separate and additional paid leave for survivors, this ordinance acknowledges the unique circumstances they may encounter and offers vital support during their journey to safety.

We commend Councilor Burnley for his dedication to championing the rights of survivors and for prioritizing their well-being within the municipal framework. His commitment to confidentiality and flexibility in the process underscores the importance of creating safe and supportive environments for survivors to access the resources they need.

In recognition of the significance of this ordinance, RESPOND is honored to offer our full support. We believe that such policies are essential for creating inclusive and equitable communities where survivors feel empowered to seek assistance without fear of repercussions.

Should you require any further information or details for the letter of support, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We are eager to collaborate with you in advancing this crucial initiative and demonstrating our collective commitment to supporting survivors in our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued service to the residents of Somerville. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of survivors and create a more compassionate and responsive city.

Sincerely,

Victoria Helberg, CEO  
RESPOND, Inc.