

MissionSAFE

Where hope thrives...



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September 10, 2021

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: NOMINATION OF RACHAEL ROLLINS TO US ATTORNEY- MASSACHUSETTS

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I am writing on behalf of MissionSAFE: A New Beginning, Inc., a grassroots youth development organization in Boston that works with over 1000 young people annually, many of whom live in areas marred by violence, are from families who are economically poor, lack the means to move to better situations, and are often families and youth of color who face a great deal of bias, still in 2021, in dealing with institutions, including the criminal justice system. We work with youth in small groups, get to know their lives deeply, and work with them to overcome trauma and poverty, build healthy relationships, leadership and violence prevention skills, and move forward with their education, jobs and potential careers.

Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins has brought transparency, fairness, a deep concern for the victims of crime (which include many of our youth and families) and a deep concern for young people who commit crimes and who may have the potential to be diverted from a criminal life. She knows the considerable research showing that prosecution of young people for small crimes can often lead them to further criminal behavior and sow the potential for continued crime and violence in their communities. If our goal is to prevent criminal behavior and damage to communities, it is key to divert from arraignment low-level offenses which come about in response to poverty and trauma, and partner these young people with community organizations who specialize in the work of diverting them from risky behaviors. MissionSAFE has been an active partner in the DA's diversion program and, using skilled and persistent interventions, has prevented numerous violent incidents and empowered youth to believe in their worth, develop skills and change their lives. We have seen first-hand that this process works to protect the victims and give the perpetrators a chance to change their lives.

DA Rachael Rollins combines boldness, clear and grounded thinking, collaborative instincts and integrity with the willingness to make the changes that strengthen communities and the justice system. We strongly support her nomination to become the top federal prosecutor for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Nikki Flionis

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