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September 9, 2021

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin, Chairman
The Honorable Charles E. Grassley, Ranking Member
US Senate Committee on the Judiciary
US Senate Office Building, Office #244 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley,

I am writing to express support for the nomination of Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins for the position of United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts.

I am a lifelong Massachusetts resident currently licensed by the Commonwealth as both as an Independent Clinical Social Worker and as an Alcohol and Drug Counselor, and have extensive experience providing care to both victims and perpetrators in a variety of settings including police stations, drug courts, residentials, acute care facilities, jails and prisons. I currently oversee several programs in Boston MA, that serve clients involved in the carceral system, that provide clinical treatment for healing from severe trauma, substance use disorders, and victimization of crimes, and have been a zealous advocate for addressing the root causes of these preventable issues. I served as the Board President of the National Association of Social Work Massachusetts Chapter from 2018-2021 and I currently serve on the Board of the Massachusetts Organization for Addiction and Recovery. Each area of my professional work is greatly affected by government leaders and I have yet to experience a government leader with more integrity and tenacity or one that has made a more profound impact than District Attorney Rachael Rollins.

Through my role at Massachusetts General Hospital, I am responsible for overseeing the Charlestown Coalition, an organization of Massachusetts General Hospital, that works collectively with residents and community partners to address the social determinants of health inequities. Only weeks after being sworn into office, a local Charlestown resident, Victor Pena was accused of kidnapping, raping and holding captive a 23-year old woman in the housing development of our community. DA Rollins worked tirelessly in partnership with the Boston Police Department to locate the victim safety and prosecute Mr. Pena fiercely and appropriately all the while communicating with and supporting the community and victim's family every step of the way. Her office showed up to offer community healing circles for our young female residents who's sense of safety were greatly impacted. She allowed space for them to express their fears and concerns and she spoke with them honestly and directly. Her transparency and attunement to community need was and has remained unparalleled.

Less than a month later, Jassy Correia, a classmate, friend, and cousin of members of our youth group in Charlestown was kidnapped and murdered leaving a nightclub in Boston. DA Rollins office acted quickly and collaboratively as she partnered with law enforcement officials in several states to ensure that the man responsible was brought to justice. Through this very complicated and complex case, DA Rollins never

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lost sight of the victim, her family, and community. The compassion she displayed was palpable as she addressed and connected with our community and her loved ones. DA Rollins reiterated in every press conference or encounter with our young people that Jassy was not at the “wrong place at the wrong time” and that she was “right where every woman has every right to be: celebrating her birthday on a night out with friends.” She never let the dialogue turn to the ownership of responsibility falling on woman or dialogues about walking home with others, she kept the focus and responsibility on the perpetrator and reminded us all that violence against woman is not a woman’s issue. We had several grief circles in partnership with Rollin’s office following that incident and her words and response to that crime was profound for so many of our young woman who reported feeling seen for the first time by a District Attorney. Within less than two months of signing into office she had already had a transformative impact on the young people we serve.

Since that time, District Attorney Rollins and her office have been consistent partners in almost every section of our work to improve community conditions including active participation on our steering committee, support and collaboration creating alternatives to incarceration by supporting the Charlestown Recovery Court, prevention efforts by providing Restorative Justice resources and programming to our residents and financially supporting our youth program, Turn It Around, which is an official program of the Suffolk County’s Diversion Program.

In addition to my work at the community level, as a social work expert vendor for federal and state public defenders, I regularly provide trauma and substance use evaluations, aid in sentencing reports, and am called to testify in addiction related criminal and child protection matters across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. With experience in almost every court across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Suffolk County under DA Rollin’s leadership is by far the most collaborative and effective in assessing and factoring in the individual circumstances surrounding criminal behavior as well as the long term implications of the safety and health of communities while maintaining a commitment to justice.

In 2019 I was appointed by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services to serve on the taxonomy commission to review evidenced-based treatments for individuals with substance use disorder, mental illness, or co-occurring disorders. This commission discussed the effects the carceral system has on mental health and the ability to implement best practice of care. Our recommendations for individualized approaches utilizing a holistic understanding a person’s needs aligned exactly with the framework that DA Rollins uses to determine what is needed for safer and healthier communities as she prosecutes cases.

It is rare to have a District Attorney grasp and understand the social structures promote health disparities and criminal offenses and the devastating consequences this has on crime and public safety and be courageous and bold enough to be proactive in her approaches. She has demonstrated an understanding of complex social issues and is one of the few government leaders that can effectively hold the duality of victim and perpetrator and the safety and well-being of communities and commitment to justice. Her intelligence, fearlessness, responsiveness, commitment to justice, empathy and compassion are what is needed at the highest levels of federal prosecution. She is exactly who I want representing Massachusetts as our US Attorney.

Respectfully Submitted,

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