OFFERED BY COUNCILORS RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE, GABRIELA COLETTA ZAPATA, SHARON DURKAN, BREADON, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FITZGERALD, FLYNN, MEJIA, MURPHY, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER, AND WORRELL

CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING THE CITY OF BOSTON'S RESPONSE TO SEXUAL ASSAULT, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AND RELATED RESOURCES FOR SURVIVORS

WHEREAS, Sexual violence remains a pervasive issue in the United States, with more than 463,000 individuals aged 12 or older becoming victims of rape or sexual assault annually, and with the highest risk among individuals aged 12-34 years old; and

WHEREAS, Domestic violence, which often involves a pattern of abusive behaviors such as physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual abuse, affects individuals in intimate or family relationships, with one in four women and one in nine men experiencing severe intimate partner violence during their lifetime

WHEREAS, Sexual assault and domestic violence affect individuals across all demographics, including race, gender, disability, and age, highlighting the need for intersectional and inclusive support systems and resources for all survivors; *and*

WHEREAS, The City of Boston must expand access to services for survivors of domestic violence, including safe housing, legal support, mental health services, and crisis counseling, as these resources are often underfunded and under-resourced; *and*

WHEREAS, Sexual assault and domestic violence survivors face an array of physical, emotional, and psychological impacts, such as guilt, fear, anger, avoidance, and trust issues, further necessitating trauma-informed, survivor-centered responses from the City of Boston; *and*

WHEREAS, Collaboration between law enforcement, advocacy organizations, healthcare providers, and community-based organizations is essential to improve the City's response to both sexual assault and domestic violence cases; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,***

RESOLVED, That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the City of Boston's current efforts in responding to sexual assault, review the impacts of initiatives, assess the adequacy of survivor support services, and explore additional measures to improve the prevention of and response to sexual violence across the city.

Filed on: October 2, 2024