

Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Room 243, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Claire Cronin, Chair
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 136, State House
Boston, MA 02133

July 17, 2020

Dear Chair Michlewitz, Chair Cronin, Vice Chair Garlick, Vice Chair Day, House members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means and House members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary:

Thank you and the members of the House of Representatives for your continued leadership in helping to advance criminal justice reform, reduce structural racism, and implement police reform across our Commonwealth.

Many of the reforms you've implemented (such as the 2019 Criminal Justice Reform Bill and several targeted Covid-19 supports for emergency child care, housing and behavioral health) have begun to move the needle on racial justice and touch the young people we work with. Like you and others across the Commonwealth, we know that this very difficult time in the history of our nation also provides an opening for change and promoting racial justice.

We are expressing our support of:

- The Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus Legislative Priorities respective of civil rights and public safety;
- The Massachusetts Elected Officials of Color Ten Point Plan recommendations, i.e. for a "Special Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training" and clear statutory limits on police use of force, including choke holds, data, and independent investigations of officer-related deaths.
- The Massachusetts Juvenile Justice Reform Coalition for their continuous efforts to promote racial equity in youth justice. Which will effectively lead to better outcomes for the young people that Roca works with.
- The Massachusetts Senate for also taking action on such incredibly important issues in our state. We are especially pleased that they have pushed to expand expungement eligibility, want to protect vulnerable students from profiling and focused on improving police practices that will lead to better interactions with offenders, victims and the community.

At Roca, we have been working with police and criminal justice partners for years with a particular focus on police/community relationships, understanding of trauma and race, as well as culture within respective institutions and in relationship with the community. We would be glad to share any or our experiences and help in any way possible. We thank you for your continued commitment, friendship and partnership. We remain committed to listening, learning and helping in any ways we can that will collectively move us toward healing and justice for all.

Sincerely,

Molly Baldwin, Founder and CEO

Scott Scharffenberg, Massachusetts Executive Director

CC: Representative Denise Garlick, Vice Chair, Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Representative Michael Day, Vice Chair, Joint Committee on the Judiciary

House members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means

House members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary