

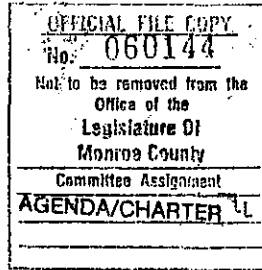


Monroe County Legislature

CARRIE M. ANDREWS
LEGISLATOR - DISTRICT 21

CARRIE M. ANDREWS
LEGISLATOR - DISTRICT 21
1100 EAST AVENUE, 5A
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14607
OFFICE (585) 753-1940
HOME (585) 442-5756
E-MAIL carrie_andrews@hotmail.com

April 10, 2006



To The Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
39 West Main Street
Rochester, New York 14614

Re: **Creation and Enforcement of a Domestic Violence Policy for Employees of Monroe County**

In 1994, a survey conducted in the City of Rochester by Rochester N.O.W. indicated that 52% of 781 female respondents stated that they feared for their lives because of persistent situations of violent abuse. Women, men, and children from all racial, religious, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds are affected and may become victims of domestic or dating violence. Often times, victims will not report their abusers out of denial, fear, or simply because they do not know whom they can turn to for help.

Domestic violence is a crime that continues to be a devastating problem in the United States. According to Amnesty International, USA, everyday 700 women are raped or assaulted by their spouses or partners. These circumstances do not have to continue. In 2005, the 109th Congress updated and reauthorized the Violence against Women Act, a crucial piece of legislation towards the protection of victim's rights and availability of services. The best way to protect those devastated by domestic or dating violence is by creating a safe and supportive environment in which victims are made aware that help is available and are encouraged to report the violence.

Monroe County sets an example to the businesses, agencies, and community at large in many ways. Currently, the County does not have an employee policy addressing domestic violence and the impact it has on the workplace. This raises a serious concern. A policy directly dealing with the crime of domestic violence will help to create a heightened awareness for the issue, and County could lead the community in taking responsibility for employees' basic welfare and safety.

Therefore, in order to protect our employees and set an example to the community, I propose the creation of a policy to assist victims of domestic violence, and punish abusers that

are currently employed of Monroe County. This policy will address administrative training, guidelines, and protocol for employees that are reported or suspected victims of domestic violence. This policy would be crafted by the County Administration to ensure a secure, reliable, and private environment for victims to access in times of need. Such a policy should establish the following:

- A clear and correct definition of who constitutes a 'victim'
- Guaranteed rights and benefits, including job security for victims
- Departmental guidelines with standardized procedures to handle the challenging situations created by acts of domestic violence
- Creation and mandated distribution of a pamphlet that contains departmental protocol and available resources within or external to the County itself
- Training of supervisors and/or administrators on how to handle situations where employees are victims
- Disciplinary actions and a policy of abuser accountability for individuals that use their positions as County employees to harass, threaten, or intimidate

In order to wage a successful campaign against this growth of crime and tragedy in our society, Monroe County must set an example that domestic violence will not be tolerated in our communities. We ask you to join us in that fight.

This action shall have no impact on the 2006 Monroe County Budget, achieved through current personnel and resources. Please forward this matter to the appropriate committee(s) for favorable action.

Respectfully submitted,

 Carla M. Palumbo Democratic Leader	 Carrie M. Andrews Legislator - District 21	 Stephanie Polowe Aldersley Legislator - District 16
 Edward M. O'Brien Legislator - District 17	 Paul E. Haney Legislator - District 23	 Willie J. Lightfoot Legislator - District 27