

Offered by City Councilors Lydia Edwards and Michael Flaherty, Campbell, Essaibi-George, Flynn, Breadon, Arroyo, O'Malley, Mejia, Bok, Campbell and Janey

**CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL**



**ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING COMMUNITY
HEALING AND TRUST BUILDING AFTER CHILD
SEXUAL ABUSE**

- WHEREAS:* According to the U.S Department of Health and Human Services Children's Bureau, in 2017 alone there were 25,092 victims of abuse or neglect in Massachusetts. Of these children, 93.9% were neglected, 8.8% were physically abused, and 3.4% were sexually abused, and;
- WHEREAS:* In the United States alone, almost 50% women and 25% of men report experiencing at least one episode of sexual violence, and;
- WHEREAS:* Sexual violence can occur to anyone at any age, including young children and is an act that can be perpetrated by strangers as well as caregivers, family members, friends, coaches, acquaintances, and intimate partners, and;
- WHEREAS:* Sexual violence is a serious public health problem with profound short and long-term impacts on physical and mental health for both the survivor and their families, and;
- WHEREAS:* In addition, to injury to the survivor and their families, there is communal injury that results in loss of trust, faith, and generational trauma, and;
- WHEREAS:* Sex offenders have a process for which they can petition the courts to change their Sex Offender Registry Board level and essentially move on with their lives;
- WHEREAS:* Survivors and their families often are scarred for life and must work most of their lives to get over the trauma of such violation of their bodies and trust, and;
- WHEREAS:* Churches, sports programs, summer camps, and leaders within those institutions have all committed atrocities against children that have caused generational communal trauma, mistrust, and anger, and;

WHEREAS: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Survivor Services in partnership with community organizations, such as Jane Doe, Inc., maximize the effective use of resources and achieve program goals toward the elimination of sexual violence, and;

WHEREAS: Currently, the MA Department of Childhood and Families oversees a Childhood Trauma Task Force charged with studying and making recommendations on improving the Commonwealth's response to childhood trauma, and;

WHEREAS: The City of Boston currently provides services for survivors and has had to deal with community trauma and loss of trust, and;

WHEREAS: Support services for survivors, friends, family, and community is crucial to the healing journey of those impacted by sexual violence, and;

SO BE IT ORDERED,

That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss holistic support and healing services for survivors of sexual assault, their families, and the communities they live in, and that representatives administration and other interested parties be invited to testify.

Filed in City Council: Wednesday, August 19, 2020