

Governor Patrick Re-establishes Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence

Names New Executive Director to Lead Revamped Council

BOSTON - June 18, 2007 -- Governor Deval L. Patrick today announced the recent filing of an executive order re-establishing the Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence. The executive order restructures the Council and calls for specific projects to help the Council focus its work. Governor Patrick also announced the appointment of Sheridan Haines to lead the Council. Ms. Haines currently serves as Deputy Director at Jane Doe, Inc., a social service and advocacy organization that protects victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

"I have seen first-hand, at different times in my life, the ways that violence, abuse, and crime can destabilize the lives of individuals, families and communities," Governor Patrick said. "It is vital that victims of sexual and domestic violence receive the protection and care they need. I am pleased to have Sheridan Haines, with her leadership and experience in assisting victims, on board to head our efforts."

Ms Haines added, "I am deeply honored to be invited to serve Governor Patrick in this capacity. To have the opportunity bring the voices of sexual and domestic violence survivors to the State House, and to work across disciplines, secretariats and departments to accomplish targeted results for victims and survivors across the Commonwealth is indeed an exciting new endeavor for me."

In addition to streamlining the structure of the council from over 300 members to 30, the executive order filed by the Governor requires the council to produce a guide for Massachusetts law enforcement agencies to consult when responding to an adult sexual assault. It also requires the council to revise and update the Massachusetts Policy for Law Enforcement Response to Domestic Violence (which was last updated in 2002).

The Council will also consider the need for further legislation to protect victims, punish and treat perpetrators, and reduce and prevent incidence of sexual and domestic violence. Members will continuously evaluate the response of law enforcement, judicial and health and human service systems to the needs of victims and consider measures to reduce incidents of assault through education and awareness. In addition, the Council will consider measures to better enable victims to transition from violent relationships to violence-free lives.

The Council will be chaired by Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray and will consist of up to 30 members appointed by the Governor. The Council will submit an annual report to the Governor with its findings and recommendations.

Ms. Haines has worked for Jane Doe, Inc. for the last 6 years, the last 5 as Deputy Director. Prior to her work at Jane Doe, Ms. Haines was the executive director of the Samaritans of Boston, a non-profit suicide prevention center. She also worked 8 years as a program planner for the Elizabeth Stone House, located in Jamaica Plan, MA, where she was responsible for the management and direction of non-profit

alternative mental health program for women in recovery from emotional distress, domestic violence and chemical addiction. She is a resident of Jamaica Plain, MA.