

Jane Does Well Applauds Massachusetts' Groundbreaking Coercive Control Legislation

Celebrating Bill H.4744's passage, which classifies coercive control and digital exploitation as domestic violence, enhancing survivor protections statewide.

WELLESLEY, MA, UNITED STATES, June 26, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Jane Does Well, a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering women navigating divorce, celebrates alongside Massachusetts with the signing of Bill H.4744 into law by Governor Maura Healey on Wednesday, June 20th, 2024. This landmark legislation now classifies coercive control and digital exploitation as forms of domestic violence, underscoring the organization's commitment to supporting survivors across the Commonwealth.



Left to right: Hilary Purtell, Jane Does Well Education & Advocacy Team, Sue Kisiday, Co-Founder of Jane Does Well, Governor Maura T. Healey, Christina Pavlina, Executive Director & Co-Founder of Jane Does Well, Carmen Aliber, Co-Founder of TRAC (Together Rising Above Coercion)

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Governor Maura T. Healey Signs Bill H.4744

Christina Pavlina, co-founder and Executive Director of Jane Does Well, expressed profound support for the legislation, stating, "We commend Governor Healey, Senate President Karen Spilka and all the legislators involved for their leadership in advancing this critical legislation. The enactment of Bill H.4744 is a watershed moment for survivors of coercive control. It represents a critical shift towards recognizing the complex dynamics of abuse beyond physical violence and acknowledges the psychological and emotional harm inflicted through manipulation and digital exploitation."

In addition to addressing coercive control, the new law enhances protections against revenge pornography and exploitation, particularly safeguarding young people from the dangers of non-consensual sharing of intimate images. It also addresses emerging threats such as deep-fake technology. The provisions emphasize Massachusetts' commitment to educating youth about the risks associated with digital interactions and promoting responsible online behavior.

Sue Kisiday, also a co-founder of Jane Does Well, added, "Today, Massachusetts takes a monumental step towards justice and protection for survivors. This legislation not only validates the experiences of those affected by the devastating consequences of coercive control but also sets a precedent for compassionate and comprehensive legislative action. It ensures that victims have legal recourse and that their experiences are taken seriously."

The passage of Bill H.4744 was the result of a collaborative effort among advocacy groups, survivors, and allies statewide, including [Together Rising Above Coercion \(TRAC\)](#), Jane Doe Inc., [The Massachusetts Law Reform Institute](#), The Mass Family Advocacy Coalition (MFAC) and Jane Does Well.

Together, these organizations mobilized a robust advocacy campaign, including webinars, legislative testimonies, and community outreach, to emphasize the urgent need for comprehensive protections against coercive control.

"For many of the women we support, the experience of coercive control and digital exploitation exacerbates an already challenging situation. This legislation sends a powerful message of solidarity and support to survivors," remarked Pavlina. "It reinforces our commitment to fostering communities where every individual can thrive free from abuse and coercion. It's also a testament to the resilience of survivors and advocates who turned their pain into action."

Jane Does Well remains steadfast in its mission to empower women through education, advocacy, and support, offering a lifeline to those navigating the challenges of divorce and domestic violence. Founded on principles of empowerment and advocacy, Jane Does Well offers a range of critical programs designed to assist women facing divorce, including legal guidance, emotional support groups, and financial empowerment workshops. These initiatives equip women with the tools and resources needed to navigate challenging circumstances and rebuild their lives with confidence.

For more information about Jane Does Well and their programs, please visit janedoeswell.org.

Megan Bresnehan | Director Digital Strategy | PR Media

Jane Does Well Org

info@janedoeswell.org

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