

## District Attorney Ryan Donates Proceeds of Forfeited Phones to Aid Domestic Violence Survivors

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Left to Right: Marian Ryan, Middlesex District Attorney; Maridelviz Ramirez Medina, Advocate with Alternative House

Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan announced that proceeds from the sale of over 250 forfeited cell phones has gone to multiple domestic violence advocacy organizations on Thursday.

Almost \$2,000.00 has been were donated to Voices Against Violence, a program sponsored by the South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC) to end sexual and domestic violence and Alternative House, a Lowell-area organization that offers shelter and support for survivors of domestic violence and their children.

The cell phones, obtained through the drug forfeiture process, are recycled for parts. The funds will be used to purchase pre-paid calling cards for survivors of domestic violence.

“When survivors of domestic violence leave abusive relationships, they often are forced to abandon their personal cell phones in an effort to sever ties with their abusers,” said Ryan in a statement. “These calling cards allow domestic violence survivors to remain in communication with their loved ones, while enabling and empowering them to continue receiving services from the community-based domestic violence organizations that are so critical to their health and safety needs.”

Ryan also directs the Middlesex District Attorney’s Office’s Domestic Violence Pro Bono Initiative. This first-of-its kind partnership is designed to address a significant gap in services for domestic violence survivors in the restraining order process. The Office identifies victims who need legal assistance and then, working with 13 Boston area law firms, assigns a private attorney to provide representation free of charge.

In 2015 Ryan’s office donated \$794 in calling cards for victims living in Transition House in Cambridge. Governor Deval Patrick appointed Ryan in 2012.

Ryan's office was criticized for its handling of the case involving the first-degree murder conviction of Jared Remy for killing his girlfriend Jennifer Martel in 2013.