



H.887 – Crime Victim Status Under the Fair Employment Practices Act
Charlie Gliserman, Policy Director
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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.887.

Last year, this committee took an important step forward in protecting survivors in the workplace through the passage of H.461 (Act 32). That bill, now law, allows survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to seek safety, seek justice, and heal. We are grateful to the committee for advancing these protections.

The Civil Rights Unit of the Vermont Attorney General's Office has identified a disparity between the documentation requirements needed to access safe leave and those required to receive protections under the Fair Employment Practices Act as a victim of crime.

The Fair Employment Practices Act prohibits employment discrimination based on protected status, including status as a victim of crime. The lack of alignment between these statutes may leave survivors vulnerable to adverse employment actions after taking legally authorized safe leave, simply due to differing documentation standards.

We request that the committee advance H.887 to align these provisions and ensure survivors can fully access both protections without unintended barriers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.