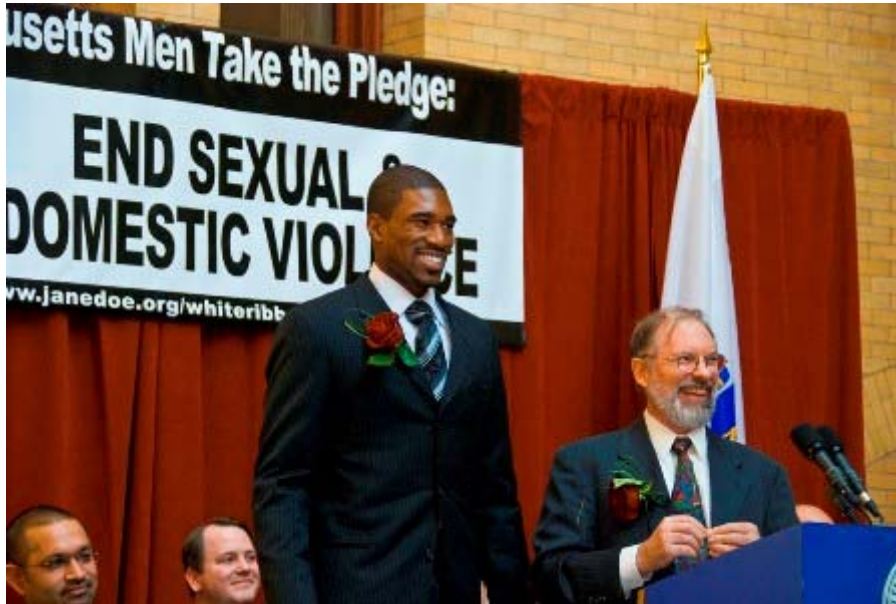


The Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence



**Leon Powe, Boston Celtics, White Ribbon Campaign Speaker
February 14, 2008: State House Event**



I am honored to be here with all of you..even though you know it was a late game last night...and, yes, we won!

As a professional athlete, I know that people, especially kids, look up to us as role models. And now especially as a new father (like I said, the baby kept me up last night, that's part of being a new father), that's a responsibility that I take very seriously.

Kids might look up to me because I play in the NBA. My hope is that they will look up to me one day because of what I've done off the court.

I hope it's a role model that I can keep being, to help kids stay on the right path, and that includes how they treat women and how they act when they see others mistreated.

Part of being a role model includes being able to live up to everything this pledge stands for.

I think it's important for everyone to know that we're up here today taking this pledge.

We all know it's easy to talk but harder to act. We need to encourage everyone to act on this and be a real advocate against abuse.

I'm happy and humbled to have the opportunity today to join such accomplished men on this stage to make it clear that we understand that this is not just a woman's issue and that men need to be strong allies as well.

You know for me, coming up in a single parent household, seeing my mom being abused by her boyfriend, I didn't really know what to do or how I felt about it. I was mad. I was sad. I didn't think I could do anything. As a little kid I felt helpless. But now that I'm grown, I believe that together we can help prevent abuse throughout the world.

We must work together, men and women, to help eliminate and prevent the abuse that affects so many innocent people today.

Thank you.