

March 23, 2009

The Honorable Kent Conrad  
Chair  
Committee on Budget  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Jr.  
Chair  
Committee on Budget  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Judd Gregg  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Budget  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Budget  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Conrad and Spratt and Ranking Members Gregg and Ryan:

On behalf of the millions of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking our organizations represent, we urge you to factor in \$1 billion in the FY10 Budget Resolution discretionary spending allocation which would fully fund the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA).

Domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking affect at least 1 in 4 women in the United States and touch the lives of many families and individuals. VAWA and FVPSA are two Federal programs that have successfully served these victims and their families in communities across the country. Since 1994, VAWA has helped victims and families in our communities and made substantial progress toward ending domestic and sexual violence. Rates of non-fatal and fatal domestic violence have decreased, more victims feel confident to come forward to report these crimes and seek services, and states have passed over 600 laws to combat these crimes. In addition to saving lives, it is estimated that VAWA saved nearly \$14.8 billion in net averted social costs in its first six years alone. For more than 20 years, FVPSA has provided safe haven to victims fleeing domestic violence by funding emergency shelters and non-residential services and has worked to end domestic violence through prevention efforts.

According to the National Census of Domestic Violence Services, on one day in 2008 over 60,500 adults and children sought support from local domestic violence programs. Due to lack of resources, there were 8,927 unmet requests for services. Victims of stalking and dating violence nationwide remain significantly underserved, and there are still large parts of the country that do not have sufficient resources to provide basic services to victims of sexual violence. The economic concerns currently facing families across the country only exacerbate the gap between demand for services and adequate resources. It is vital that we provide communities with the resources needed to meet this growing need.

**We urge you to invest in the progress and promise of VAWA and FVPSA by setting the discretionary spending allocation high enough to include \$1 billion in funding for these vital programs.** This funding will provide critical investments in our communities that will save lives, rebuild families, and prevent future crimes. If you have any questions, please contact Tralonne Shorter, at the National Network to End Domestic Violence at [tshorter@nnedv.org](mailto:tshorter@nnedv.org) or 202.543.5566.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

**Enclosed:** VAWA and FVPSA Fact sheet

Sincerely,

American Humane Association

Break the Cycle

Casa de Esperanza

Family Violence Prevention Fund

Jewish Women International

Justice Solutions

National Alliance to End Sexual Violence

National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

National Congress of American Indians Task Force on Violence Against Women

National Council of Jewish Women

National Center for Victims of Crime

National Network to End Domestic Violence

National Organization for Women

National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault (SCESA)

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape

Sacred Circle National Resource Center to End Violence Against Native Women

Sheila Wellstone Institute

Stop Family Violence

The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty

YWCA USA