

An introduction to the FVPSA Reauthorization bill 2019

A bipartisan bill ([S.2259](#)) to reauthorize the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) was introduced in the Senate number on July 24th by U.S. Senators [Lisa Murkowski](#) (R-AK) and [Bob Casey](#) (D-PA). It contains many of the key enhancements advocated for Casa de Esperanza and the National Latin@ Network.

Administered by the Department of Health and Human Services since 1984, FVPSA is the only federal funding source dedicated to providing support to domestic violence shelters and programs. FVPSA provides core funding to support more than 1,600 local public, private, nonprofit and faith-based organizations and programs in their response to the urgent needs of over 1.3 million domestic violence victims and their children in the United States.

This bill provides the following enhancements:

- Increases the funding authorization level to \$252 million to respond to very low per-program funding levels and provide access to FVPSA funds for programs not currently funded.
- Makes adjustments to the current formula to address tribal sovereign relationships, restructures the funding for the children's program grants and ensures access for tribal coalitions and the newly authorized culturally specific grant program.
- Expands support for, and access, to culturally-specific programs. Culturally-specific organizations are better equipped to address the complex, multi-layered challenges facing victims from racial and ethnic minority populations as they seek services and protections from abuse. Culturally-specific programs often have challenges accessing FVPSA funding at the state and local levels due to the limited funding available and robust competition. This bill authorizes a new culturally-specific program to address these needs and incorporates related funding into the grant formula itself.
- Creates a new underserved populations grant program. The lack of resources and severity of violence is often heightened for survivors living at the margins, such as those living in rural communities, individuals with disabilities, older adults, those identifying with faith-based communities, youth and others. These underserved populations are often reluctant to seek assistance, and when they do, they frequently look for services and support in their immediate communities. This bill creates a grant program for family centers, youth centers, senior centers, community-based organizations or vocational organizations to meet the needs of these survivors.
- Authorizes new grants to local community-based programs to conduct effective prevention efforts, particularly those serving culturally-specific or traditionally underserved communities.

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casa de esperanza

We applaud U.S. Senators Murkowski and Casey for their leadership on this issue and recognizing the important, life-saving work domestic violence shelters and programs do to promote healthy families.