



National Task Force to End Sexual & Domestic Violence

Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”) Reauthorization October 2018

Key enhancements and targeted fixes recommended by the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (“NTF”) for the reauthorization of VAWA

The NTF supports a VAWA reauthorization that continues important protections for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking and makes targeted fixes and modest, yet vital, enhancements. ***Any bill that erodes current protections is unacceptable.*** Our recommendations are based on needs identified by direct service providers who work daily with victims and survivors of these four crimes. We will continue to work to obtain bipartisan support for a VAWA reauthorization that meets the needs of victims and survivors and includes the following priorities:

- Provides increased investments to implement evidence-based prevention programming;
- Safeguards current protections and resources to ensure that *all* victims and survivors have access to safety and justice;
- Improves the mechanism to hold people who perpetrate violence on Native women and children accountable;
- Provides law enforcement with new resources to develop more trauma-informed approaches;
- Provides law enforcement with more resources to enforce court orders and prevent intimate partner and law enforcement homicides;
- Offers improved protections for survivors in federally subsidized housing;
- Supports victims and survivors who need help rebuilding financially after experiencing violence;
- Addresses the needs of underserved communities; and
- Improves the healthcare responses to the four crimes.

Why doesn't the NTF support a straight VAWA reauthorization bill?

The NTF and our grassroots advocates oppose a reauthorization bill that does not continue to improve our nation's prevention and response to the four crimes. The time to improve prevention efforts is now, not in five years. Victims and survivors cannot wait - their safety is at stake and their lives are on the line. We will not accept a bill that moves us backwards, and we will not support a bill that only maintains the status quo. Every previous VAWA reauthorization has made important strides to improve efforts to address the needs of people impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking, and this reauthorization should be no different.

When does VAWA authorization expire?

VAWA grant programs were last reauthorized in 2013 for a five year period, until Sept. 30, 2018. The continuing resolution (CR) extended VAWA's authorization until December 7th. While our goal is to reauthorize VAWA before it expires, we recognize that VAWA is a complex bill and Congress may not have sufficient time to pass a bipartisan bill with improvements to VAWA before then. VAWA programs and services have been funded for 2019 in several already-passed appropriations bills and are included in the continuing resolution which funds the rest of the government. The CR will need to be renewed after December 7. We can accept some delay in reauthorizing VAWA to ensure the resulting bill improves investments in prevention and includes enhancements to better meet the identified needs of victims and survivors.

Does the NTF support any existing VAWA reauthorization bills?

The NTF supports H.R. 6545, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2018, a modest bill that was designed to have bipartisan appeal. H.R. 6545 includes the targeted fixes and modest enhancements identified as priorities by the field. We oppose other existing bills that seek only to delay VAWA's expiration rather than making improvements necessary to improve victims' and survivors' access to safety and security and to prevent future violence.

What is the National Task Force to End Sexual & Domestic Violence?

The NTF is focused on the development, passage, and implementation of effective public policy to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The full membership of the NTF comprises a large and diverse group of national, tribal, state, territorial and local organizations, as well as individuals, committed to securing an end to gender-based violence.

How does the NTF steering committee develop its policy recommendations?

The NTF centers its policy making process on feedback from the field by broadly and frequently surveying thousands of advocates and allied professionals about the needs of survivors and communities. This extensive feedback informs the work of subject matter committees that develop specific recommendations to draft and improve legislation. A steering committee, comprised of organizations who have a major focus on stopping sexual and domestic violence, meets regularly and through consensus, makes decisions, crafts statements, issues alerts and carries out advocacy at the national level.

For more information, email NTF4VAWA@gmail.com