



National Resource Center on Domestic Violence



national latin@ network casa de esperanza

N | C | D | B | W NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR THE DEFENSE OF BATTERED WOMEN Working for justice for victims of battering charged with crimes



NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE NCADV



eliminating racism empowering women ywca



STRONGHEARTS Native Helpline



The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community

November 22, 2019

Representative McBath U.S. House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Moore U.S. House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Cole U.S. House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Katko U.S. House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives McBath, Moore, Cole, and Katko:

The undersigned organizations thank you for your leadership in introducing the bipartisan Family Violence Prevention and Services Improvements Act (FVPSA) of 2019 to re-authorize core support and enhance comprehensive responses to domestic violence. FVPSA provides critical support for shelters, coalitions, training and technical assistance centers, children's services, emergency response hotlines, and prevention initiatives. This bill also expands grant programs and makes many needed improvements to ensure more survivors have access to support and safety.

FVPSA provides core funding to support more than 1,600 local, public, private, nonprofit and faith-based organizations and programs and over 200 tribes and tribal organizations in responding to the urgent needs of over 1.3 million domestic violence victims and their children.¹ As you know,

there is still a great need to increase survivors' access to these vital programs as well as to address current unmet needs. Estimates show that due to a lack of capacity, nearly 200,000 requests for shelter can go unmet in a year.ⁱⁱ As demonstrated in the annual survey of the National Network to End Domestic Violence, in just one day in 2019, programs across the country were unable to meet 11,336 requests from survivors (requests for emergency shelter, housing, transportation, childcare, counseling, legal representation, and other supportive services).ⁱⁱⁱ

The important improvements in the FVPSA bill reflect the priorities of the domestic violence field and the diverse needs of survivors, including:

- Strengthening the capacity of Indian Tribes to exercise their sovereign authority to respond more fully to domestic violence in their communities, and authorizing funding for tribal coalitions and the currently funded Alaska Native Women's Resource Center.
- Bolster support for culturally-specific programs through a grant program that increases the capacity of community-based organizations to expand access to safety, as well as provisions that promote best practices.
- Providing a more robust investment in prevention by bringing evidence-informed, community-based prevention initiatives to more states and local communities across the country.
- Continuing and expanding support for national technical assistance (TA) centers and their work to develop effective policy, practice, research, and cross-system collaborations.
- Updating provisions and definitions to ensure access to services for all survivors, better align with related programs, and reflect evolving practices in order to provide uniform guidance to the DV field.
- Updating provisions for the National Domestic Violence Hotline and hotline services for underrepresented populations, including American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Deaf victims of domestic and dating violence.
- Creating an underserved grant program to increase access to safety for populations that face additional barriers, and
- Increasing the funding authorization level to address very low per-program funding levels and provide access to FVPSA funds for more programs not currently funded.

We must continue to ensure that when survivors take the courageous step to reach out for support, individuals, organizations and institutions are prepared to address the risks faced by survivors and their children, and improve efforts to create pathways to enhanced safety and well-being.

As you lead the efforts to pass the Family Violence Prevention and Services Improvements Act of 2019, we thank you again for your leadership on behalf of survivors, their families, and their communities around the country.

Sincerely,

Alaska Native Women's Resource Center (ANWRC)
Alliance of Tribal Coalition to End Violence
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence (API-GBV)
Battered Women's Justice Project (BWJP)
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities
Futures Without Violence
National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health (NCDVTMH)
National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)
National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP)
National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)
National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH)
National Indigenous Women's Resource Center
National LGBTQ Institute on IPV
National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)
StrongHearts Native Helpline
The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV)
Ujima: National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community
YWCA USA

ⁱ https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fysb/state_tribal_fvpsa_data_20150515.pdf

ⁱⁱ <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/fact-sheet/domestic-violence-and-homelessness-statistics-2016>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://nnedv.org/content/domestic-violence-counts-14th-annual-census-report/>