



Reauthorize VAWA!!!

December 12, 2011

Good news: Senator Kirk (R-IL), Senator Blumenthal (D-CT), Senator Boxer (D-CA), Senator Durbin (D-IL), Senator Franken (D-MN), Senator Klobuchar (D-MN), Senator Kohl (D-WI), Senator Schumer (D-NY) and Senator Whitehouse (D-RI) have joined Senators Leahy (D-VT) and Crapo (R-ID) as co-sponsors of the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), S. 1925. We hope that new sponsors will be joining the list every day. To see more about the bill and the updated list of co-sponsors, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php> and type in S. 1925 in the bill search box.

This new version of the bill, which was introduced on November 30 in the Senate, maintains VAWA's core focus on criminal justice responses and services for victims, but it also includes important prevention programs that focus on children and youth and ways to engage men as leaders and role models in ending domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. Recent headlines only underscore the need to target programs at children and youth and the increasing support for preventing violence before it does so much harm and perpetuates the often inter-generational cycle of violence.

How does VAWA make a difference for children and youth?

- Children who are exposed to even one type of violence are at far greater risk of experiencing other types of violence, including teen dating violence and then domestic violence.
- The recent Department of Justice study, National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence, found that 15.5 million children live in two-parent homes where adult partner violence occurred in the previous year.
- Approximately one in three adolescent girls in the United States is a victim of *physical, emotional or verbal* abuse from a dating partner – a figure that far exceeds victimization rates for other types of violence affecting youth.
- This year's VAWA bill would create a \$15 million program that is a consolidation of two existing prevention programs (*Services for Children Exposed to Violence and Abuse* and *Engaging Men and Youth*) and within this comprehensive program include a teen dating violence and sexual violence prevention focus. It would also allow states to use up to 5 percent within the STOP grant program for prevention or education.
- For these reasons, Members of Congress need to hear that prevention of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking is an important part of the VAWA bill.

The time is now to reach out to Congress and support VAWA through letters, online media, and highlight the programs and issues important to you! Background materials, including the VAWA toolkit, can be [accessed here](#).

If you have questions, want to sign on to the VAWA support letter, and to report back about your efforts or results, please email advocacy@nnedv.org. (Once NNEDV receives all of you sign on responses, we will submit them as an NNEDV package to the National Task Force!)

TAKE ACTION TODAY!

Suggested actions for this week include:

1. Emailing Congress about the important role VAWA plays in preventing violence;
2. Participating in the first #ReauthorizeVAWA Twitter Carnival on Wednesday; and
3. Signing onto a letter in support of VAWA.

Action 1: Email your Senators and Representatives TODAY with this message:

I am writing to you about the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, in order to encourage Senator/Representative _____ to sign on as a cosponsor. The Violence Against Women Act has had an enormous impact since it was first reauthorized 17 years ago. More victims report domestic violence to the police and the rate of non-fatal intimate partner violence against women has decreased by 53%. The sexual assault and domestic violence services programs in VAWA helps rape crisis centers and domestic violence programs keep their doors open to provide the frontline response to victims.

The VAWA of 2011 continues the effective programs to address these crimes but also includes a prevention and education focus to stop the intergenerational cycle of abuse. It would bring greater attention to the issues of children's exposure to violence and efforts to prevent it and help younger victims. It also includes an increased focus on the prevention of teen dating violence and sexual violence and recognizes the importance of targeting interventions earlier, when young people are starting to form relationships and develop their attitudes and behaviors around the acceptability of violence and abuse.

As Congress considers reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, we're particularly grateful to this attention to community-based prevention programs and educational programs that meet the needs of the more than 15 million children and youth who are exposed to violence. By preventing violence before it happens we prevent horrific harm from happening in the first place and interrupt the cycle of violence.

Action 2: Participate in the first #ReauthorizeVAWA Twitter Carnival on Wednesday, December 14th at 12pm EST, 11am CST, 10am MST, 9am PST

HUGE thanks to all who all who have been tweeting about VAWA. **Now we need to make #ReauthorizeVAWA a trending topic on twitter.** In order to do that we need a lot of people to tweet messages including the hashtag #ReauthorizeVAWA in a SHORT amount of time.

The bigger a splash we can make by sharing this, the better!

You can help us trend #ReauthorizeVAWA by tweeting one of the messages below (or one of your own creation as long as it includes #ReauthorizeVAWA in it) on Wednesday, December 14th at noon EST. If you can't/won't be in front of your computers at noon you can still send out the post on twitter at noon by signing up for <http://www.hootsuite.com> and scheduling your message to post on December 14th at noon (just make sure you're time settings are for EST). During the Twitter Carnival, you should also retweet and respond to the twitters of others – always including #ReauthorizeVAWA.

Thanks for the terrific tweets already out there! Check out the following sample Tweets -- and feel free to edit for your own streams:

- #ReauthorizeVAWA to ensure survivors of abuse get the protection and help they need! RT!
- #ReauthorizeVAWA to help provide teens and young adults the bright futures they deserve! RT!
- #ReauthorizeVAWA and help make interpersonal violence a thing of the past! RT!
- One call today could save one life tomorrow. #ReauthorizeVAWA <http://bit.ly/ReAuthVawa> RT!
- Since its passage the # of individuals killed by their partner has decreased by 34% for women & 57% for men. #ReauthorizeVAWA RT!
- In its first 6 years, VAWA saved \$12.6 Bil in net averted social costs. #ReauthorizeVAWA
- Tell congress how important it is to victims of violence and abuse to #ReauthorizeVAWA . <http://bit.ly/VAWAtoolkit> RT!
- 100's of orgs worked hard 2 ensure #VAWA protects ALL ppl from violence. Help #ReauthorizeVAWA <http://bit.ly/VAWAtoolkit> & RT!
- Help #ReauthorizeVAWA call your senators TODAY and RT! <http://bit.ly/VAWAtoolkit>
- #ReauthorizeVAWA & help those who have or will experience abuse in a relationship. RT!
- #ReauthorizeVAWA because sexual assault is everyone's issue. <http://bit.ly/VAWAtoolkit> RT!
- #ReauthorizeVAWA because domestic & dating violence & sexual assault affect millions every year. <http://bit.ly/VAWAtoolkit> RT!
- Save billions of dollars. Change millions of lives #ReauthorizeVAWA <http://bit.ly/VAWAtoolkit> RT!
- #ReauthorizeVAWA because no one deserves a life sentence for falling in love. <http://bit.ly/whyVAWA> RT!
- Tell your members of congress to #ReauthorizeVAWA and put an end to violence against women. <http://bit.ly/VAWAtoolkit> RT!
- Join 100's of orgs in ending violence against women. #ReauthorizeVAWA RT! <http://bit.ly/VAWAtoolkit>
- Help prevent domestic violence, dating violence & sexual assault. Call on your congressmen to #ReauthorizeVAWA RT!
- Help #ReauthorizeVAWA & provide funding for critical services for #domesticviolence and #sexual assault victims RT!

Action 3: Sign on to the VAWA support letter.

Last week, NNEDV sent a sign on letter to every Member of Congress urging VAWA's reauthorization. Today, the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women sent the attached VAWA sign-on letter to every Member of Congress from a diverse group of national organizations. This week NNEDV joins the effort to gather hundreds if not thousands of state and local organizations to add to the list of signatories. We'll then redeliver the letter before the holidays with the multitude of additional supporters. To sign on, please send your organization's full name and your contact information to advocacy@nnedv.org. We will compile all of your organizations' sign-ons and add them to the large group letter. At this time, we aren't adding individuals to the list - but hope that every one of us takes personal actions to get VAWA sponsored and passed. **The deadline to sign on is Friday, December 16th at 10:00am Eastern.**

If you aren't on our action alert email list or want to add members of your staff or state/community leaders to our grassroots alerts e-mailing list, send names and contact information including email to us at advocacy@nnedv.org.

Thanks,
NNEDV Policy Team



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