February 11, 2013

Urge Your Senators to Vote for S.47

Thank you for all of your work last week on VAWA! Defeating the Grassley substitute to S.47 was your victory! Thank you for all of your calls.

Today, the Senate will vote on S. 47. Your Senators still need to hear from you to “Vote for S. 47, with no harmful amendments.” (See below for more information about NNEDV’s position on proposed amendments. Please call now!

Action Steps:

1) Call the Capitol switchboard at 888.269.5702 and ask the operator to connect you to your Senators. If you don’t know who your Senators are, you can look them up here.

2) When you’re connected to their offices, tell the person who answers the phone:
   • I am a constituent from (city and state) and my name is __________.
   • I urge Senator_____ to vote yes on S. 47, a strong, bipartisan bill that would reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act – and to oppose any harmful amendments that are introduced.
   • Thank you and I look forward to hearing that the Senator has voted for VAWA.

3) Watch the action unfold live on the Senate floor on C-SPAN2 or at http://www.c-span.org/Live-Video/C-SPAN2/.

Thanks for all that you do!
NNEDV’S POSITION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- **OPPOSE**: Coburn amendment (#13) to reaffirm the inalienable rights of every American citizen guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States.
  
  Why: With our Tribal allies, we oppose amendments that fail to respond to the need for tribal jurisdiction in cases of domestic violence committed against Native American women by non-natives.

- **OPPOSE**: Coburn amendment (#15) to more quickly resolve rape cases and reduce the deficit by consolidating unnecessary duplication within the Department of Justice.
  
  Why: VAWA reauthorization include provisions to address the rape kit backlog, making this amendment unnecessary. Furthermore, this amendment would require serious cuts to all VAWA programs and divert much-needed money away from programs. Our SA colleagues stand with us in opposing this amendment.

- **OPPOSE**: Coburn amendment (#16) to amend the requirements for speedy notice to victims and to require a report to Congress.
  
  Why: There are real and legitimate reasons why states would not be able to comply with the requirements in this amendment (to screen for and pay for treatment of STDs), causing many states to face a penalty and risk losing a substantial amount of funding for victim services programs.

There are also two amendments related to trafficking that NNEDV, after much discussion with our national allies, has agreed to take no position on. This change from our previous action alert is derived at as a result of the conflict between agreeing with the merits of the need to address trafficking and the practical recognition that trafficking is a distinct issue with its own nuances that should be addressed in separate legislation. For that reason, we have now decided to decline advocacy either for or against these amendments.

- Portman amendment (#10) would clarify that child victims of sex trafficking are eligible to receive assistance under grants provided to enhance the safety of youth and children.

- Leahy amendment (#21) would authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2014 through 2017 for the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, to enhance measures to combat trafficking in persons, and for other purposes.