February 26, 2013
Please forward widely!

House Republicans introduce partisan VAWA that fails to protect all victims.

Legislation will be before the House Rules Committee TODAY and debated on the House floor as early as WEDNESDAY
TAKE ACTION NOW!

The Republican's version of VAWA, which substitutes the Senate's inclusive, comprehensive version of S.47 for a bill that excludes effective protections for LGBT, tribal, immigrant, and campus victims, will likely be on the House floor this Wednesday. NTF opposes this bill. We need to call our Representatives and urge them to vote against the House Republican Leader's substitute VAWA and ask them to vote for the field-approved VAWA that passed in the Senate with strong bipartisan support.

Representatives Issa and Cole may ask the Rules committee to allow them to offer an amendment to replace the House's flawed tribal provisions with improved language that will provide effective, constitutionally sound protections for Native victims of domestic violence. Call your Representatives and ask them to tell House leadership to accept the Issa/Cole amendment.

78 Senators from both parties and over 1,300 local, state and national professional and policy organizations support the Senate-passed bill as do law enforcement officials, health care professionals, community program and service providers, and the tens of millions of survivors and their families, friends and loved ones who rely on and have benefitted from and used the services and resources provided by the 19 year old law which has now expired.

It must be noted that after months of tireless efforts by advocates working with the Republican leadership staff, there are some small but very important improvements in this substitute and the bill is not the punitive version of last year's House bill.

Nonetheless, this House version of the bill fails victims in a number of critical ways:
• Fails to include the protections for LGBT victims from the Senate bill

• Provides non-tribal batterers with additional tools to manipulate the justice system, takes away existing protections for Native women by limiting existing tribal power to issue civil orders of protection against non-Native abusers, while weakening protections for Native women

• Contains harsh administrative penalties and hurdles for small struggling domestic violence and sexual assault programs and an additional layer of bureaucracy through the office of the Attorney General

• Drops the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination (SaVE) Act, which is included in the Senate bill, that improves the handling of sexual violence and intimate partner violence on college campuses

• Drops important provisions in the Senate bill that that work toward erasing the rape kit backlog

• Weakens protections for victims in public housing

• Drops the inclusion of "stalking" among the list of crimes covered by the U visa (a critical law enforcement tool that encourages immigrant victims to assist with the investigation or prosecution of certain enumerated crimes)

We must oppose this partisan substitute and pass the Senate version of VAWA. 201 Democrats are sponsors of H.R. 11, the House replica of the Senate bill as introduced. 19 Republican Representatives have asked the House Republican leaders to pass a bipartisan bill that “reaches all victims” and dozens more Republicans support some or all of the Senate provisions that are not included in the Republican VAWA imposter.

**BIPARTISAN ACTION ITEM:** Call your Democratic House members to ensure that they will oppose the Republican leadership’s substitute and support the “real” S. 47, the Senate passed bill.

Find out if your Republican Representative is one of the 19 who supports a bipartisan, inclusive VAWA and ask them step up and to oppose the Republican leader’s substitute and demand and support a vote on the Senate bill

a. Call or email the 19 (Poe R-TX and Ros-Lehtinen R-FL have added their names) who signed the letter to House leadership. See letter and signatories here. Names and contact information here.

b. Call or email the 7 Members who voted against last years’ harmful, non-inclusive Republican VAWA
c. Call or write the 26 House members who have interest in one or some of the Senate's inclusive provisions

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For more information, fact sheets, press coverage, support letters and updates: www.4vawa.org.

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If you aren’t on one of the VAWA email lists 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 ntfvawaalerts@icasa.org. For more info, go to www.4vawa.org.