

NEWS FLASH!

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Report on the Tenth Anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

Report on the Tenth Anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). At this event, Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues leaders released a new report assessing the impact of the ten-year old federal law, and Members of Congress, advocates, celebrity activists and survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence discussed its achievements and shortcomings. Advocates and survivors told powerful personal stories highlighting the progress made in the ten years since VAWA was enacted, and many noted that much more needs to be done. All urged Congress to broaden the scope of and increase funding for VAWA.

The Congressional Research Service (CRS), which conducted the report, concluded that the first major legislation ever to address violence against women has helped the nation begin to consider domestic violence a serious crime rather than a private family or personal problem. The CRS report indicates, however, that many victims fail to report violence because they believe it is a private or personal matter, or because they fear retaliation.

Other findings include:

- From 1993 and 2001, the National Crime Victimization Survey finds that violence against women has been cut in half from 1.1 million non-fatal violent crimes in 1993 to 588,490 female victims in 2001.
- The percentage of women who experienced violence from an intimate partner and reported it increased from 48 percent in 1993 to 59 percent in 1998. The report attributes this increase to stronger arrest policies.
- From 1998 to 2000, states have passed more than 660 laws to combat domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.
- Young women age 20 to 24 experience the highest rate of violence, yet only 46 colleges in the nation have applied for grants to implement the campus security provisions of VAWA.
- From 1993 to 1998, violence against African American women was 35 percent higher than violence against white women, and more than doubles the rates of violence against women of other ethnicities.

The report is available online on U.S. Representative Louise Slaughter's web site, www.louise.house.gov.