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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT PASSES!!!!

(October 4, 2005) Washington, DC - Due to the strong leadership of Senators Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Joseph Biden (D-DE), the Senate this evening approved the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) by unanimous consent. The Senate's passage follows the House's approval late last week. Lynn Rosenthal, president of the National Network to End Domestic Violence says the groundswell of support in both the House and Senate shows that the nation's leaders recognize the importance of continuing and strengthening services that support victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

"We thank Chairman Specter, Senator Biden and their colleagues for their tremendous leadership and fulfilling their promise to reauthorize and strengthen VAWA," said Rosenthal. "The passage in the House and Senate is a great victory for victims and their children."

Now that VAWA has passed in the House and Senate, the two chambers will meet to work out differences in their respective pieces of legislation. Most notably, the House version only contains criminal and civil justice provisions, while the Senate bill contains more comprehensive provisions addressing prevention, crisis and advocacy services, and housing protections. Rosenthal says she is confident that the bill's conferees will work towards a final version of VAWA that contains comprehensive programs to meet the needs of survivors.

"The more we learn about the dynamics of domestic violence, the more we understand that a comprehensive approach is necessary," says Rosenthal. "For instance, with 92% of homeless women having experienced severe physical or sexual abuse at some point in their life, VAWA must provide safe, decent, affordable long-term housing for victims of abuse."

NNEDV has been a leading force in efforts to support VAWA. As a member of the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women, NNEDV has played an influential role in the current Senate bill. NNEDV and its member state domestic violence coalitions also played crucial roles in the passage of VAWA in 1994 and its reauthorization 2000. NNEDV's sister organization, the National Network to End Domestic Violence Fund (NNEDV Fund), has been instrumental in assisting state domestic violence coalitions and local communities in implementing current VAWA programs.

National Network to End Domestic Violence

The National Network to End Domestic Violence a social change organization representing state domestic violence coalitions, is dedicated to creating a social, political and economic environment in which violence against women no longer exists. For more information, please visit www.nnedv.org.

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