Statement by the Vice President on the Eighteenth Anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act

Eighteen years ago today, the landmark Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was signed into law. It was founded on the basic premise that every woman deserves to be safe from violence, and since its passage, we have made tremendous strides towards achieving that goal. We gave law enforcement and the courts more tools to combat domestic violence and hold offenders accountable. We created a national hotline to direct victims to life-saving assistance. And since VAWA passed, annual rates of domestic violence have dropped by more than 60 percent.

But we still have much work to do. Three women still die every day as a result of domestic violence. One in five women have been raped, many as teenagers, and one in six women have been victims of stalking. While women and girls face these devastating realities every day, reauthorization of a strengthened VAWA languishes in Congress. VAWA is just as important today as it was when it first became law, and I urge Congress to keep the promise we made to our daughters and our granddaughters on that day – that we would work together to keep them safe.

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