



LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
28TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

June 5, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20215

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 S Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20215

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Speaker Boehner:

As an original co-author of the Violence Against Women Act, I am writing to ask you to move quickly to conference on the reauthorization of this legislation crucial for the victims of domestic violence and those agencies and organizations who serve them. We must send the President a strong, bipartisan bill that protects all vulnerable victims.

I was more than proud to craft the original Violence Against Women Act with my colleagues Pat Schroeder in the House and then-Senator Joe Biden in the Senate. At the time, a woman was raped every six seconds in the United States and a female was beaten every 15 seconds, and yet there were many who believed that protections for women did not need to be written into law. Thankfully, we succeeded in the campaign to explain the importance of protecting women from the horrors of abuse.

The Violence Against Women Act has without question been successful. It has saved lives and helped millions of victims find safety, security and self-sufficiency. Since its enactment, cases of domestic violence have fallen, and over one million women have used the justice system to obtain protective orders against their batterers. VAWA has averted more than \$14 billion dollars in societal costs as interventions have lowered domestic violence frequency and sexual assault rates. The law has also succeeded in bringing communities together to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Even with all of the advancements that have been made, three women a day in this country are still killed by an intimate partner. Obviously there is much more work to be done. We must move forward with this reauthorization in an expedient manner.

Victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence - crimes that disproportionately impact women - need a VAWA reauthorization that does not rollback of protections for immigrant women or women of color and their families and includes protections for all victims, specifically the LGBT community and Native women. VAWA must also include the strongest protections for victims on campus and in public housing; protect the ability of criminal justice officials and community stakeholders to provide input to the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors) Grant Program planning process; and be free of overly burdensome and bureaucratic requirements for victim services providers struggling to be present for every victim every day.

I strongly urge you to move past politics and send a VAWA reauthorization bill to the President that he can sign immediately.

Sincerely,



Louise M. Slaughter