



# Federal Advocacy: What Advocates Need to Know

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**March 8, 2018**

# Objectives

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- Provide overview of federal advocacy and local advocates role in impacting it
- Inspire advocates to act when asked!

# Overheard in my world . . .

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DH (to DD): That's the capitol. Legislators make laws there.

DD: What are laws?

DH: A law is something that tells people what they can do or can't do.

DD: . . .

DD: Is Mommy a law?

# Federal legislation: A tool for social change, progress

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- Protects survivors (federal crimes; non-discrimination, etc)
- Funds programs – advocacy, victims services, training, collaboration
- Some laws create barriers
- A limited tool
- Requires implementation, funding and enforcement, training



# Authorization & Appropriation

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- Authorization – VAWA, FVPSA, other
  - Usually every 5 years
  - Opportunity for changes
- Appropriations Annual
  - 12 bills
  - VAWA and VOCA
  - FVPSA
  - Housing

# Persuasion

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NEDV



# An ode to words

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- Well-researched facts
  - NNEDV Census (100% response rate!!)
  - NAESV survey
- Identified problems
- Workable, winnable solutions
- Conveyed in a beautiful package

# VOLUME

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- DC is a noisy place
- Many issues
- Rise above the din



# Our strength, our movement

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- 100 state, territorial and tribal domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions
- 4,000 local programs (DV, SA, victim services)
- Millions of survivors and families
- Local communities, allies, and more



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# Everything is local

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NNEEDV



# Advocacy in these times . . .

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- House, Senate and Administration are one party – easier to pass legislation
- Taxes – implications for funding
- Increased focus on cutting funding
- Concerns for historically marginalized communities (immigration, LGBTQ, lower-income families)
- SO MUCH TO TAKE IN, RESPOND TO
- DV/SA in the spotlight



# Our collective success!

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# Recent wins

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- Quadrupled and sustained VOCA funds
- Preserved funds in VAWA despite threats
- An inclusive VAWA that meaningfully addresses sexual violence, affirms tribal sovereignty, 1<sup>st</sup> non-discrimination in federal law, strengthened housing provisions and held on to immigration protections
- Healthcare push back
- First step successes on guns
- First step successes on housing

# Advocates role – the strength of the network

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- Controlled panic 😊
- Sustained, steady voices
- Patience (ish)
- Relationships
- Pushing outside comfort zone (taking risks for the greater good)
- Kept it about survivors

# When and how will we ask you to act?

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- When: When necessary!
- How:
  - Calls – DC and District
  - Eye contact ;-)
    - Town halls
    - In-district meetings (coordinate with coalition)
- Invite Members of Congress & their staff to your events
- Media
- Send emails
- Tweets, Facebook etc.
- Build relationships – couch asks in their priorities



# Tell your story

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- How your work makes an impact
- Elevate the voices of survivors
- State and district specific
- Be yourself!





# What's coming up?

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- Appropriations
  - Preserving funds, creating funding stream for tribes
- VAWA reauthorization
- FVPSA reauthorization
- Housing legislation – HEALS Act
- Firearms – Fix NICS (oppose CCR)
- EJ legislation (next slide)
- Immigration
- Other (threats and opportunities)

# EJ-specific policies

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- Safe Act
- Social Safety net
- Tax credits
- Healthy Families Act
- Family Act
- Pregnant Workers Act

# What can we expect in the near future?

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- Seizing watershed moments to lift survivors voices
- Increased need for advocacy
- Covering our main issues **AND**
- Strengthening our support for broad social change and supporting survivors across identities

# Sustaining ourselves for the long haul

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- Non-legislative successes
- Claim our incremental victories
- Self care



# Questions?

