The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) urges Congress to increase essential funding for domestic and sexual violence programs in Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22). Despite progress in reducing domestic violence over the last 30 years, many victims are still trapped in life-threatening situations. Domestic violence affects millions of victims each year and has increased in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional resources are needed in FY22 to fill in the gaps. The priority programs outlined below allocate resources to every state and territory.

**Victims of Crime Act Fund (VOCA): $2.65 Billion and Policy Changes**
VOCA is made up of fines and penalties paid by federal criminals, not taxpayer dollars, and funds nearly 6,500 victim services organizations. Congress must also pass the VOCA Fix to increase deposits into the fund.

**Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA): $463 Million**
FVPSA funds emergency shelters, crisis lines, counseling, victim assistance, and other vital services for over one million domestic violence victims and their children each year.

**Culturally Specific Services Program (New HHS Program): $35 Million**
Survivors of color urgently need culturally-relevant services that address domestic and sexual violence.

**Violence Against Women Act (VAWA): $1 Billion**
VAWA programs ensure that victims are safe and offenders are held accountable. Key programs include:

- **Sexual Assault Services Program**: $100M for rape crisis centers.
- **Culturally Specific Program**: $40M to provide services for survivors of color.
- **Transitional Housing Program**: $80M to house survivors and rebuild their lives.
- **Legal Assistance for Victims**: $80M for civil legal assistance for survivors.
Domestic and Sexual Violence Funds for Homelessness Assistance: $75 Million
An ongoing set-aside in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care program allows communities to provide targeted housing and assistance for survivors facing homelessness.

These funding streams work together to ensure that local domestic violence and sexual assault programs have the resources to meet survivors’ complex needs—for services, shelter, housing, counseling, advocacy, and more—in every state and territory.

VOCA Funding: $2.65 Billion and Policy Changes (CJS/DOJ)
The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) uses non-taxpayer money from the Crime Victims Fund (CVF) for programs that serve victims of crime, including state-formula victim assistance grants. These funds, which are generated by fines paid by federal criminals, support services to over six million victims of all types of crimes annually, through over 6,000 direct service organizations such as domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, and child abuse treatment programs. Sustained VOCA funds are needed to respond to the dangerous lack of available services for victims.

Deposits to the CVF began shrinking considerably in the past few years and, as a result, programs have begun experiencing massive cuts in victim services funding. Congress must update statutory language to increase deposits to the fund to avoid continued cuts to local programs and worsened gaps in survivor services. Unless revenues into the CVF are supplemented by other types of criminal fines, the entire CVF balance could be depleted within five years. **Congress must provide steady funding in FY22 and work towards sustainability of the CVF. We urge you to:**

- Request strong and steady funding to be released from the VOCA fund each year and ask for $2.65 billion specifically in FY22 to address the urgent needs of victims of crime.

- Pass S. 611, the VOCA Fix bill, to increase deposits to the CVF. The Fund should be supplemented with criminal fines and penalties made pursuant to federal deferred and non-prosecution agreements. (The companion House bill, H.R. 1652, passed with strong bipartisan support.)

- Support a continued federal funding stream from VOCA for tribes. Individuals on tribal lands experience disproportionately high rates of domestic and sexual violence and need funding for victim services.

- Reject proposals that use the VOCA fund to pay for other Department of Justice (DOJ) programs since that reduces funding for direct victim services.
Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) - $463 Million (LHHS/HHS)

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) supports lifesaving services, including emergency shelters, crisis hotlines, counseling, and programs for underserved communities throughout the United States. Administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), **FVPSA is the only federal funding source dedicated to domestic violence shelters and programs.** A multi-state study funded by the National Institute of Justice shows that the nation’s domestic violence shelters are addressing both the immediate safety and long-term needs of victims, including economic stability.\(^1\)

The latest available data revealed that FVPSA-funded programs provided shelter and nonresidential services to approximately 1.2 million survivors and their children annually. Over 93% of clients reported that they had improved knowledge of planning for their safety.\(^2\)

Despite FVPSA’s success, community-based domestic violence programs report that, at current funding levels, they cannot meet the overwhelming demand for services. In FY18, programs were not able to meet 255,332 requests for shelter due to a lack of capacity.\(^3\) NNEDV’s 15th annual Domestic Violence Counts Report found that, during one day in 2020, 76,525 victims of domestic violence received services; however, on that same day, 11,047 requests for services went unmet due to a lack of funding. Of those unmet requests, 57% were for safe housing.\(^4\) COVID-19 has exacerbated this problem, with requests for domestic violence services already increasing and expected to remain elevated for well over a year. Increased FVPSA funding will help close this unacceptable gap in services. **We urge Congress to provide $463 million, as outlined in the President’s FY22 budget for FVPSA programs and direct cash assistance to survivors.**

Culturally Specific Services Program - $35 Million (LHHS/HHS)

Communities of Color have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Higher infection and mortality rates\(^5\) in Communities of Color are indicative of long-term systemic inequities, including access to healthcare, wealth and wage gaps, the digital divide, lack of language access, housing disparities, and food deserts, among other issues.\(^6\) There is a dearth of funding for under-resourced, culturally specific programs, which are a lifeline for survivors in their communities. These organizations provide holistic services; offer language access for survivors with limited English proficiency; provide food; and increase access to other lifesaving resources. Funding for culturally specific services for Communities of Color is nominal and is truly insufficient to meet the needs of domestic violence and sexual assault survivors at the nexus of a public health and financial crisis. **In order to assist all domestic violence and sexual assault survivors, Congress must allocate $35 million for a new Culturally Specific Services Program to be administered by the Family Violence Prevention and Services Office at HHS.**
Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) - $1 Billion (CJS/DOJ)

We urge Congress to provide $1 billion for VAWA DOJ programs as outlined in the President’s FY22 budget. Priority programs are outlined below.

Sexual Assault Services Program – $100 Million
The Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) is the only federal funding stream dedicated to the provision of direct services to victims of sexual violence. A recent report to Congress revealed 55,000 survivors of sexual assault had been served and 300 advocate positions were supported by SASP during the reporting period. Across the country, SASP funds support the critical services that adult and child victims need most, including counseling, accompaniment through medical and legal processes, and support for underserved populations. Research shows that these services increase prosecution rates and help victims recover. However, the nation’s 1,500 sexual assault programs often lack the resources to meet victims’ most basic needs. According to a 2020 survey by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV), 35% of programs lack a therapist on staff, with survivors waiting up to six months for a counseling appointment. Increased SASP funds will help fill in the gap to support local rape crisis centers.

Culturally Specific Service Program – $40 Million
This program, expanded in the House-passed VAWA reauthorization bill (H.R. 1620), provides funding to culturally specific organizations to reach survivors in Communities of Color who face barriers in accessing services.

Transitional Housing Program – $80 Million
This vital VAWA program helps communities in every state give victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking a safe place to begin to rebuild their lives. On just one day in 2020, 38,586 adults and children were housed in domestic violence housing and shelter programs. On the same day, however, 6,301 requests for emergency shelter, transitional or other housing were denied due to a lack of capacity. The extreme dearth of affordable housing nationwide produces a situation where many victims of domestic violence must return to their abusers because they cannot find stable housing, while others are forced into homelessness. This is particularly challenging as stay-at-home orders are lifted and survivors seek safe housing. Because many individuals have lost income and must now rebuild their lives separate from an abusive former partner, the need for housing assistance will remain elevated until the economy rebounds. Increased investment in the Transitional Housing program will allow more communities to house survivors and their children.

Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) Program – $80 Million
Research indicates that the practical nature of legal services gives survivors long-term alternatives to their abusive relationships. Legal services are also vital to support survivors of sexual assault in civil matters. However, the retainers or hourly fees for
private legal representation are beyond the means of most victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Legal services are second only to medical services as the most-requested need of victims. Sadly, many survivors do not have the means to secure legal assistance in the aftermath of domestic abuse or sexual assault. The number of unique visitors to NNEDV’s WomensLaw.org legal information website more than doubled in the 15-month period from March 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021, compared with the prior 15-month period, in part due to demand for legal assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The LAV program is the only federally-funded program designed to meet the legal needs of victims. Targeted increases to the LAV program are a sound investment in long-term solutions to violence.

### Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Bonus Fund via HUD’s Continuum of Care Homeless Program - $75 million (THUD Budget, HUD-Administered)

Survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault often flee unsafe circumstances and seek refuge through emergency shelter, transitional housing, and rapid-rehousing programs in order to avoid homelessness. Dedicated funds for survivor-specific housing resources, including rapid-rehousing, offer a stable funding source for victim service providers to address the unique safety needs of survivors.

Since FY18, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations have included significant investments that preserve and increase housing assistance for the most vulnerable families, including a $50-$52 million set-aside for housing for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in the HUD Continuum of Care homelessness assistance program (also known as the DV Bonus Funds). The funds support victim-specific housing and supportive service projects to assist survivors of domestic violence and sexual violence. Between FY17 and FY18, the DV Bonus Funds supported an increase of 6,600 beds and over 2,800 more units dedicated to survivors of domestic violence.  

**We urge Congress to allocate $75 million for this key program to help survivors access safe, affordable housing and rebuild their lives.**

### Additional DOJ/VAWA Programs (CJS)

The priority programs described in the preceding pages are not the only important sources of support for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Other VAWA programs are essential to meet the multifaceted needs of survivors.

**VAWA STOP Program – $400 Million**

VAWA’s Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors (STOP) Grant Program supports coordinated community responses to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, helping hundreds of thousands of victims find safety and receive services,
while holding perpetrators accountable for their actions. STOP funds are awarded to every state and territory through a formula-based system, and the funds also support tribes; state, territorial, and tribal coalitions; and culturally specific programs. Communities use STOP funds to ensure the system-wide response to survivors is tailored and well-equipped to meet survivors’ needs. Victims benefit from services, including advocacy, crisis intervention, local hotline call advocacy, counseling and support, and victim/witness notification. In 2016, STOP grant-funded programs helped 362,172 victims and trained 252,795 professionals. Increased investment in STOP will allow communities to expand homicide reduction efforts, continue to improve law enforcement and prosecution responses, and serve additional victims. We support the President’s investment in VAWA programs. In the STOP program, we call on Congress to prioritize newly allocated funding to invest in victim services, especially culturally specific programs. Additionally, we call on Congress to prioritize funding for tribes and state, territorial, and tribal coalitions.

Rural Grant Program – $50 Million
Survivors in rural areas face unique barriers, including: a lack of access to childcare, legal services, and public transportation; under-resourced law enforcement; and fewer domestic violence programs. Funding for the Rural Grant Program, which supports services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault living in rural and isolated areas, has remained stagnant for the last several years despite the enormous need.

Remaining VAWA Programs – Full Funding as Authorized (See Chart)
All VAWA programs work together to provide a comprehensive response to victims of violence, including lifesaving services to victims with disabilities, elderly victims, and transgender survivors; programs to prevent violence by working with children, youth, and college students (including increased investments in Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutes, and Tribal Colleges); projects addressing courts and visitation; a response to the epidemic of sexual assault and domestic violence on tribal lands; projects addressing violence in the workplace; and prevention programs and public health responses to violence and abuse. These programs must receive sustained and increased funding to ensure that our communities can build on our years of progress and meet the needs of all victims.

Additional HHS Programs (LHHS)

DELTA (CDC) – $26 Million
The Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancements and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) program, administered by the Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC) National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, is the only dedicated federal funding source for the primary prevention of domestic violence. In approximately 45 communities across the nation, the DELTA program identifies effective strategies to prevent first-time
perpetration and first-time victimization of domestic violence. DELTA states have piloted and evaluated a range of programs designed to promote safety and respect across communities. A growing body of evidence indicates that domestic violence and dating violence rates can be decreased over time with the implementation of DELTA programming. The work being done with multi-level strategies (individual, relationship, community, and societal strategies) focuses on changing social norms and promoting behaviors that support healthy relationships. A substantial increase in funding will enable the DELTA program to expand to additional states and communities, and will also provide opportunities for communities to leverage additional funding.

Rape Prevention and Education (CDC) – $75 Million
Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) formula grants, administered by the CDC’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, provide essential funding to states and territories to support prevention programs conducted by rape crisis centers, state sexual assault coalitions, and other public agencies and private nonprofit entities. The RPE program prepares individuals to get involved, prevent sexual violence and create safer communities. RPE is working. A five-year randomized trial funded by the CDC found that, in Kentucky high schools, there was a more than 50% reduction in the self-reported frequency of sexual violence perpetration by students at schools that received the RPE-funded Green Dot bystander intervention training. However, a 2019 survey by NAESV revealed that 84% of rape crisis centers saw an increase in demand, while almost half had to reduce public awareness and prevention hours due to budget shortfalls.

Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant – $7 Million for Sexual Assault Prevention and Services
The Public Health Service Act of 2010 included a guaranteed $7 million minimum set-aside in the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, administered by the CDC to support direct services to victims of sexual assault and to prevent rape. States and communities rely on the set-aside to fund critical sexual assault services and prevention work.

National Domestic Violence Hotline – $26 Million
The National Domestic Violence Hotline (The Hotline) provides immediate assistance to survivors who reach out for support, resources, and safety planning. The Hotline provides services by phone, chat, and text, which has been particularly crucial while survivors are trapped in their homes during the COVID-19 health crisis. From March 16 to May 16, 2020, The Hotline began collecting data to track how COVID-19 impacts survivors and saw a 9% increase in total contacts received. The Hotline partners with, and supports, the StrongHearts Native Helpline and the Abused Deaf Women’s Advocacy Services.

Violence Against Women Health Program – $10 Million
The Violence Against Women Health Program at the Office on Women’s Health trains medical professionals on identifying and supporting survivors of violence. It increases partnerships between health providers and victim service providers.

### About NNEDV

The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) represents the 56 state and territorial coalitions against domestic violence. NNEDV fights to make the elimination of domestic violence a national priority, change the way society responds to domestic violence, and strengthen advocacy at the national, statewide, and local levels. Please contact Melina Milazzo (MMilazzo@NNEDV.org) or Monica McLaughlin (MMcLaughlin@NNEDV.org).

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