

April 21, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Leahy and Vice Chairman Shelby, Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of the 21 undersigned national organizations which are working to end domestic violence and sexual assault, we urge you to significantly increase the funding for non-defense discretionary (NDD) spending to provide sufficient allocations to the committees of jurisdiction that fund critical federal programs that address domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.

Domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking are life-threatening, pervasive crimes that affect millions of people every day. NDD programs include a variety of funding streams across the federal budget that are key to providing vital public services and support for victims of these crimes. We recognize the demands of the many funding priorities facing the country at this time; however, we urge you to keep in mind the importance of ensuring adequate resources are available for survivors who need support as the country continues to recover from the pandemic by significantly boosting the FY 2023 302(b) allocations to address vital and on-going needs.

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey reveals that domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are widespread. In fact, domestic violence alone affects more than 12 million people each year and every day in the U.S. an average of three women are killed by a current or former intimate partner. Nearly one in five women have been raped in their lifetime and nearly one in two women have experienced some form of sexual violence. Over 80% of women who were victimized experienced significant short and long-term impacts related to violence such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, injury, and missed time at work or school. According to a recent analysis, the estimated lifetime cost of rape was \$122,461 per victim, or a population economic burden of nearly \$3.1 trillion (2014 U.S. dollars) over victims' lifetimes.

In addition to the already high rates of domestic violence, dating violence and sexual assault, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted survivors. Survivors are at extreme risk in a time of heightened economic, health, familial, and emotional trauma. As survivors continue to feel safer reaching out, the demand for services continues to grow and programs must be prepared and well-resourced to serve them.

The National Network to End Domestic Violence Counts report found that in just one day in 2021 nearly 10,000 requests for services went unmet due to lack of funding and resources. According to a recent survey by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence 76% of programs reported an increased demand for services this past year. The Administration for Children & Families estimates that, domestic violence programs had 181,364 requests for shelter that went unmet. The National Domestic Violence Hotline has answered over 6 million calls, chats and texts from people seeking support and safety since 1996. The Hotline's call volume has continuously increased, reaching historic new levels in February 2022, with volume nearly doubling compared to 2021.

The Budget Control Act (BCA) significantly limited NDD funding over the past decade, creating a period of austerity that impeded the programs that serve survivors of violence in meeting the needs of their communities. Without a substantial increase in the NDD allocation, it will be impossible to meet the documented and growing needs of survivors around the country. We desperately urge you to increase NDD funding and we thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Tribal Coalitions to End Violence
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
Black Women's Blueprint
Caminar Latino-Latinos United for Peace and Equity
Esperanza United (Formerly Casa de Esperanza National Latin@ Network)
Futures Without Violence
Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Jewish Women International
Legal Momentum, the Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women
National Council of Jewish Women
National Indigenous Women's Resource Center
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
Tahirih Justice Center
The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
The National Domestic Violence Hotline
Ujima Inc., The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community
ValorUS
YWCA USA