

December 12, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the undersigned federally-recognized state and U.S. territory domestic violence coalitions, we write to express our strong support for S.1275, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Improvement Act of 2021, and to urge you to include this lifesaving bill in an end of year package. The bipartisan S.1275 re-authorizes core support and enhances comprehensive responses to domestic violence, family violence, and dating violence. It has not been reauthorized in over a decade, and includes critically needed updates and improvements to ensure more survivors have access to support and safety.

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) is the only federal funding source dedicated to domestic violence shelters and programs. It provides core funding to support more than 1,500 local domestic violence programs and over 250 tribes and tribal organizations to respond to the urgent needs of over 1.3 million domestic violence victims and their children.ⁱ However, there is still a great need to increase survivors' access to these vital programs, as well as to address current unmet needs. Due to a lack of capacity, nearly 200,000 requests for shelter go unmet in a year.ⁱⁱ The National Network to End Domestic Violence's [Domestic Violence Counts Report](#), found in just one day in 2021, programs across the country were unable to meet 9,444 requests from survivors, including requests for emergency shelter, housing, transportation, childcare, counseling, legal representation, and other supportive services.ⁱⁱⁱ

The FVPSA Improvement Act not only provides critical support for shelters, coalitions, training and technical assistance centers, children's services, emergency response hotlines, and prevention initiatives, but also expands grant programs and makes many needed improvements to ensure more survivors have access to support and safety.

The important improvements in S.1275 reflect the priorities of the domestic violence field and the diverse needs of survivors, including:

- Increasing the funding authorization level to address very low per-program funding levels and provide access to FVPSA funds for more programs not currently funded.
- Updating provisions and definitions to ensure access to services for all survivors, better alignment with related statutes, and reflect evolving best practices amongst service providers to provide uniform guidance to the domestic violence field.
- Strengthening the capacity of Indian Tribes to exercise their sovereign authority to respond more fully to domestic violence in their communities, and authorizing funding for tribal coalitions and the currently funded Alaska Native Women's Resource Center.

- Bolstering support for all survivors through a grant program that increases the capacity of culturally specific community-based organizations to expand access to safety for survivors of color, as well as provisions that promote best practices.
- Providing a more robust investment in prevention by bringing evidence-informed prevention initiatives to more tribes, states, and local communities across the country.
- Continuing and expanding support for national technical assistance (TA) centers and their work to develop effective policy, practice, research, and cross-system collaborations and includes a new resource center for Native Hawaiians.
- Updating provisions to include additional access and resources for survivors with disabilities and Deaf survivors, including a new TA center on enhancing accessible services for those survivors.
- Updating provisions for the National Domestic Violence Hotline and hotline services for underrepresented populations, including American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and Deaf survivors.
- Creating an underserved grant program to increase access to safety for populations that face additional barriers.

Moreover, in order to address this unconscionable gap between desperate need and available resources, we urge you to fund FVPSA at \$300 million for FY23. Increased federal investment will help ensure that local programs can help all survivors who reach out for help.

As the 117th Congress comes to a close, we urge you to include the bipartisan S. 1275 in an end of the year package and fund FVPSA at \$300 million for FY23. We thank you for your leadership on behalf of survivors, their families, and their communities around the country. We stand ready to support your efforts to ensure these bills are passed before the end of this Congress.

Sincerely,

Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
 Arizona Coalition to End Sexual & Domestic Violence
 Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
 CAWS North Dakota
 Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 District of Columbia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin
 Florida Partnership to End Domestic Violence
 Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence
 Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Jane Doe Inc., the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence
Kansas Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence
Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
Michigan Coalition to End Domestic Violence
Mississippi Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Missouri Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual & Domestic Violence
Nevada Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence
New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence
New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence
New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Ohio Domestic Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence
South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
South Dakota Network Against Family Violence & Sexual Assault
Tennessee Coalition to End Domestic & Sexual Violence
Texas Council on Family Violence
Utah Domestic Violence Coalition
Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
Violence Free Minnesota
Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault

ⁱ https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fysb/fysb_fvpsa_factsheet_oct_2020_508.pdf

ⁱⁱ <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/fact-sheet/domestic-violence-and-homelessness-statistics-2016>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://nnedv.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/16th-Annual-Domestic-Violence-Counts-National-Summary-FINAL.pdf>