

Senator Tammy Baldwin, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Senator Shelly Moore Capito, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Representative Robert Aderholt, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Representative Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee and Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Senator Jeanne Shaheen, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Senator Jerry Moran, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Representative Hal Rogers, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Representative Matt Cartwright, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Senator Brian Schatz, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Representative Steve Womack, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Representative Mike Quigley, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Senator Chris Murphy, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Senator Katie Britt, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Representative Mark Amodei, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Representative Lauren Underwood, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security

September 30, 2024

Dear Senators and Representatives:

The National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (NTF) represents national, tribal, state, and local organizations working to end domestic violence and sexual assault. The needs of survivors are great and growing. In fact, the National Network to End Domestic Violence's (NNEDV) 18th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report found that on one day in 2023, 76,975 victims of domestic violence received services; however, on that same day, 13,335 requests for services went unmet due to a lack of funding. In addition, a 2023 survey by the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV), found 70% of programs addressing sexual assault experienced an increased demand for services. Accordingly, we write today to urge you to quickly pass a final Fiscal Year (FY) 25 appropriations bill to support critical funding for programs addressing survivors' needs.

Survivors rely on federally-funded direct services such as shelter, rape crisis services, culturally specific services, legal assistance, counseling, prevention programs, and much more. However, the overwhelming demand for services leaves many of these effective and essential programs short of the necessary funding to meet the need. In May, over **350** organizations signed an **FY25 Appropriations request letter**¹ outlining survivors' needs and the role of federal programs in meeting their needs.

FY 2025 Funding is needed to support survivors and prevent sexual assault and domestic violence.

Maintaining and steadily increasing funding for Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grants, Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) programs, the Rape Prevention and Education Program, DELTA Prevention Program, and the Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault set-aside in homelessness funds, along with increased funding released from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), will allow communities to provide lifesaving direct services and investments in prevention. We are extremely grateful for these critical funds that will save and transform lives. The federal government funds vital programs at the U.S. Departments of Justice (DOJ), Health and Human Services (HHS), and Homeland Security that reach into every community across the nation to provide safety, access to services, and justice for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

As you begin to work on the final FY25 spending package, we urge you to provide the highest level possible for the following highlighted formula grant programs and national services.

- \$1.9 billion for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA, DOJ), a program that serves over 6,000 victim services agencies across the nation, including on tribal lands, to help victims/survivors deal with the immediate aftermath of a crime.
- \$80.5 million for the Sexual Assault Services Program (VAWA, DOJ), which is the federal government's only funding source dedicated to sexual assault services and rape crisis centers in every state.
- \$11 million for the Culturally Specific Services Program (VAWA, DOJ), which provides core specialized language and other services for survivors of color.
- \$250 million for the Family Violence Prevention Services Act (FVPSA, HHS), which is the federal government's only dedicated funding stream for domestic violence shelters and lifesaving services.
- \$7.5 million for the Culturally Specific Public Health Approach for Survivors Program (OFVPS, HHS), which provides urgently needed culturally relevant services that address the health impact of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- \$5 million for the Sexual Assault Technical Assistance Initiative (OFVPS, HHS).
- \$61.75 million for the Rape Prevention and Education Program (RPE, DELTA, HHS, CDC), which supports comprehensive sexual violence prevention in every state for communities and schools and \$5.5 million for the Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancements and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) prevention grant program. The House bills eliminate these programs (though restored \$40 million to RPE via amendment).
- \$20.5 million for the National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH, HHS), which receives over 900,000 contacts per year via the Hotline; StrongHearts Native

¹<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bdR0JG77hLrA3j4FznQudUJ8JQD3CoKt/edit?usp=sharing&oid=114041577466573034747&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Helpline, which serves the specific cultural and jurisdictional needs of Native victims of domestic and dating violence; and Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services (ADWAS), which is the only national service program for Deaf and hearing-challenged survivors of domestic violence.

- Restore funding to key VAWA programs that the House eliminated such as LGBTQ services, Outreach to Underserved, and culturally specific services.
- \$52 million for housing for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault - the "DV/SA Bonus" in the HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) homelessness assistance program (HUD).

We ask you to support and prioritize investments included in the President's FY 2025 budget to reach the most vulnerable survivors, including increasing funding for culturally specific organizations; funding for LGBTQ and Deaf survivors; direct financial assistance to meet survivors' emergency needs, support for families affected by domestic violence at the intersection of substance-use coercion, housing instability, and child welfare involvement. This includes investments in VAWA and related discretionary programs such as projects addressing violence in the workplace; prevention programs and public health responses to violence and abuse that all work to complement the state formula grants by propelling innovation and providing targeted responses to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. **All the programs detailed in the enclosed chart work together to provide a comprehensive response to victims of gender-based violence.**

Finally, we urge Congress to provide at least \$15 million (in addition to \$400 million to address USCIS backlogs) to process victim-related applications within 90 days of receipt and ensure the timely access to employment authorization for victims in the U visa program, as well as in the T visa and VAWA Self-Petition programs. Each of these programs must receive additional funding to ensure that our communities can build on our years of progress and meet the needs of ALL victims.

Thank you in advance for supporting increased funding for these vital programs. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact, Francesca Caal Skonos, National Network to End Domestic Violence, at fcskonos@nnedv.org or Terri Poore, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, at terri@endsexualviolence.org. *Your continued leadership in keeping victims safe and healthy is very much appreciated!*

List of Organizations

Alliance of Tribal Coalitions to End Violence
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
Esperanza United
Futures Without Violence
Jewish Women International
Just Solutions
Legal Momentum
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence
National Domestic Violence Hotline
National Indigenous Women's Resource Center
National Network to End Domestic Violence

National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault (SCESA)
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
Tahirih Justice Center
Ujima, The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community
VALOR

Cc:

Senator Patty Murray, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
Senator Susan Collins, Vice Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
Representative Tom Cole, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Representative Rosa DeLauro, House Appropriations Committee

