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REAUTHORIZE THE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND SERVICES ACT (FVPSA)

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), first authorized in 1984, is the **ONLY** federal funding source dedicated directly to domestic violence shelters and programs. However, **FVPSA expired in 2008** and must be reauthorized immediately to continue to meet the needs of victims fleeing life-threatening situations.

FVPSA-funded programs are the foundation of our nation's response to adult and child victims of domestic violence. It funds essential services that are at the core of ending domestic violence: emergency shelters, hotlines, counseling and advocacy, primary and secondary prevention – immediate crisis response and the comprehensive support to help victims put their lives back together. Over 1,500 local domestic violence agencies rely on FVPSA-funding to keep their doors open to victims seeking safety.

When asked what he liked best about staying in the shelter, a 10-year-old boy replied, "I can sleep at night."
Domestic Violence Program in Maryland

FVPSA's reauthorization will allow communities across the country to continue to provide critically needed direct services to victims of domestic violence and their children, which will help to prevent homicides and break the cycle of violence. The reauthorization will also improve the delivery and access of services to meet a broad range of diverse needs.

Congress must take swift action to ensure that victims facing life-threatening abuse can get the help they need to be safe and rebuild their lives.

- ☑ In the House, we urge you to co-sponsor H.R. 4116, a bill to reauthorize FVPSA, and prioritize the bill's passage in the 111th Congress.
- ☑ In the Senate, specifically Members on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, we urge you to prioritize the passage of S. 3817, a bill to reauthorize FVPSA with key improvements.

FVPSA REAUTHORIZATION SHOULD INCLUDE:

- A \$250 million funding reauthorization level to meet the increasing demand for services;
- Targeted and defined resources for specialized children's services;
- A distinct definition of dating violence to ensure that all victims in danger can access services;
- Targeted resources and increased access to funding for community-based organizations meeting the needs of underserved and marginalized communities;
- An expanded emphasis on prevention, by improving and statutorily defining the DELTA prevention program; and
- Streamlined and updated language to reflect current and emerging best practice, enhance consistent implementation and monitoring by HHS and Congress, and make provisions consistent with those of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) 2005.

FVPSA REAUTHORIZATION AND FUNDING NEED

FVPSA REAUTHORIZATION

- FVPSA is usually reauthorized with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).
- Over 200 national, state and local organizations have signed on to a letter urging Congress to swiftly reauthorize FVPSA.
- U.S. House of Representatives
 - H.R. 4116, a bill to reauthorize FVPSA, was introduced by Representatives Gwen Moore (D-WI), Aaron Schock (R-IL), Gregorio Sablan (I-MP) and Judy Biggert (R-IL) in November 2009.
 - H.R. 4116 has over 110 bi-partisan co-sponsors.
 - The bill has been referred to the Education and Labor Committee, Health Families and Children Subcommittee but there has been no further action on H.R. 4116.
 - **We urge Representatives to co-sponsor H.R. 4116 and to prioritize the passage of this vital bill in the 111th Congress.**
 - To co-sponsor, contact Representative Moore's staffer Steffany Stern at steffany.stern@mail.house.gov.
- U.S. Senate
 - The committee of jurisdiction is Children and Families Subcommittee of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee.
 - Senators Dodd (D-CT), Harkin (D-IA) and Enzi (R-WI) introduced a S. 3817 to reauthorize FVPSA and CAPTA on September 22, 2010.
 - **We urge Senators, especially those on the HELP Committee, to prioritize the passage of a FVPSA reauthorization bill with key improvements.**

FVPSA FUNDING

FVPSA supports lifesaving emergency shelter, crisis lines, counseling, safety planning, legal assistance and preventative education to millions of adults and children annually. These effective programs save and rebuild lives. A recently released multi-state study shows conclusively that the nation's domestic violence shelters are addressing both urgent and long-term needs of victims of violence, and are helping victims protect themselves and their children.¹ Yet, there is an unconscionable gap between desperate need and available resources. In just one day in 2009, 65,321 victims were served by 1,648 domestic violence programs. On that same day, however, over 9,000 requests for services went unmet because programs lack the necessary funding resources to meet the victims' needs.²

The President's FY '11 budget proposal includes \$140 million for FVPSA, a \$10 million increase from FY '10. **We urge Congress to fund FVPSA at \$150 million to meet the growing demand for services.**

¹ Lyon, E. & Lane, S. (2009). Meeting Survivors' Needs: A Multi-State Study of Domestic Violence Shelter Experiences. National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and UConn School of Social Work. Found at <http://www.vawnet.org>.

² Domestic Violence Counts 09: A 24-hour census of domestic violence shelters and services across the United States. The National Network to End Domestic Violence (March 2010).