

February 27, 2013

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of our faith-based organizations, representing millions of people of faith in all 50 states across our nation, we are writing today regarding the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). As representatives of diverse faith traditions, we are committed to ensuring that all victims of violence have equal access to justice, strong legal protections and can access the lifesaving services they need to move from crisis to stability. **We urge you to vote against House leadership's VAWA substitute bill and support the bipartisan, inclusive Senate VAWA reauthorization bill that recently passed the Senate in a 78-22 vote.**

In times of crisis, victims often turn to their faith communities and leaders for guidance and support. Faith leaders are on the front lines each day identifying victims, providing refuge, referring victims and their families to VAWA programs and services, and offering hope and healing. We believe that the reauthorization of VAWA gives lawmakers an opportunity to build upon previous successes and make critical improvements to meet the changing needs of victims and provide more avenues for assistance and support.

Since its original passage in 1994, VAWA has dramatically enhanced our nation's response to violence against girls and women, boys and men. More victims report domestic violence to the police and the rate of non-fatal intimate partner violence against women has decreased by 64%. But violent crimes against women are still perpetrated each day. **Despite great progress, more must be done to strengthen federal responses to violence and address the unmet needs of vulnerable victims, including Native women, immigrant women, LGBT victims of violence, and victims of violence on college campuses. We are disappointed that many of these critical protections are omitted from the House VAWA bill being considered this week and ask you to vote against this legislation and work in a bipartisan manner to pass the Senate bill.**

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to working with faith communities to support victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. We look forward to working with you to swiftly reauthorize a strong, bipartisan VAWA in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress. Please contact Miri Cypers at Jewish Women International at [mcypers@jwi.org](mailto:mcypers@jwi.org) or 202 857 1300 for additional information.

Sincerely,

Association of Jewish Family & Children's Agencies (AJFCA)  
Anti-Defamation League  
Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice  
B'nai B'rith International  
Clergy Task Force on Domestic Abuse in the Jewish Community  
Church Women United  
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Global Justice Institute  
FaithTrust Institute  
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.  
HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society)  
Hindu American Seva Charities  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Islamic Society of North America  
Islamic Social Services Association - USA  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
The Jewish Federations of North America  
Jewish Women International  
Metropolitan Community Churches  
Muslim Public Affairs Council  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Council of Jewish Women  
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby  
North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists  
Peaceful Families Project  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice  
Safe Havens Interfaith Partnership Against Domestic Violence  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Institute Justice Team  
The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns of the PC(USA)  
The National Council of the Churches of Christ, USA (NCC)  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries  
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society  
United Methodist Women  
Women of Reform Judaism