

Statement for the Honorable Doris O. Matsui
Floor Remarks on S. 47: Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013
February 27, 2013

I thank the gentle lady from New York for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support for the bipartisan, Senate-passed Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act.

Since the Violence Against Women Act first became law in 1994, the incidence of domestic violence is down more than 60 percent.

It is with that same record of success that we should address the prevalence of domestic violence in underserved communities.

In my district of Sacramento, we are fortunate to have an organization called WEAVE, which provides crisis intervention services to domestic violence and sexual assault victims.

Recently, WEAVE admitted a woman and her 8-year-old son, Tucker, to their safe house. By the time Tucker reached the safe house, his father's verbal abuse had convinced him that he was stupid and insignificant. For an 8-year-old boy to no longer smile, to play games, to enjoy life is heartbreaking.

Fortunately, Tucker's mother rescued herself and her son by using the resources that the Violence Against Women Act makes available. Tucker is now living away from his father, in counseling, and on his way to a happy and healthy future.

Time and time again we hear that programs like this break the cycle of domestic violence.

We must view this legislation not just as a women's issue, but as a family issue, as a community issue that touches all of our lives.

It is essential for all past and future victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking that we strengthen and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

I urge my colleagues to reauthorize an all-inclusive version of the Violence Against Women Act.